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ANTHONY AND ANNA

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

NOVELS

MRS. MARTIN'S MAN
ALICE AND A FAMILY
CHANGING WINDS
THE FOOLISH LOVERS
THE WAYWARD MAN
THE FIRST MRS. FRASER

SHORT STORIES

THE MOUNTAIN AND OTHER STORIES

PLAYS

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HOW TO WRITE A PLAY
THE THEATRE IN MY TIME

ANTHONY AND ANNA
A Comedy in Three Acts

by
ST. JOHN ERVINE

*Revised Edition based on
the new version of the play*

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TO
IRENE HENTSCHEL

The original version of this play was produced by WILLIAM ARMSTRONG at The Playhouse, Liverpool, on March 9, 1926, with the following cast:

FRED	<i>Jack Minster</i>
GEORGE.	<i>James Harcourt</i>
JACOB PENN	<i>Hannam Clark</i>
HUBERT DUNWOODY	<i>Geoffrey King</i>
ANTHONY FAIR	<i>Cecil Parker</i>
ANNA PENN	<i>Muriel Randall</i>
LADY CYNTHIA SPEEDWELL	<i>Constance Pelissier</i>
JAMES JAGO.	<i>Harry Bristow</i>

The present version was produced in the West End of London for the first time by IRENE HENTSCHEL at the Whitehall Theatre on November 8, 1935, with the following cast:

FRED	<i>Tom Gill</i>
GEORGE.	<i>James Harcourt</i>
JACOB PENN	<i>Morris Harvey</i>
HUBERT DUNWOODY	<i>Clive Morton</i>
ANTHONY FAIR	<i>Harold Warrender</i>
ANNA PENN	<i>Jessica Tandy</i>
LADY CYNTHIA SPEEDWELL	<i>Fabia Drake</i>
JAMES JAGO.	<i>Jack Raine</i>

THE FIRST ACT

The Coffee-Room of the Inn of St. Peter's Finger.
Wednesday morning.

THE SECOND ACT

The Public Sitting-Room of the Inn of St. Peter's Finger.
Sunday afternoon.

THE THIRD ACT

Same as Act II. Three hours later.

The Time is the Present Day.

CHARACTERS

ANTHONY FAIR, a gentleman at large

HUBERT DUNWOODY, the well-known and popular novelist.

JACOB PENN, an American millionaire.

ANNA PENN, his daughter.

JAMES JAGO, a rich business man.

LADY CYNTHIA SPEEDWELL, a reduced gentlewoman.

GEORGE, head waiter and owner of the Inn of St. Peter's
Finger.

FRED, another waiter.

ANTHONY AND ANNA

THE FIRST ACT

The scene is laid just before lunch on a Wednesday in July, in the coffee-room of the Inn of St. Peter's Finger. The Inn looks as if it had seen better days (which, in fact, it has) and may be said to be living on its reputation, for, although several tables are prepared for visitors, only one of them is laid in the knowledge that it will be used. FRED, a young waiter, is standing in the bow window, looking into the village street. GEORGE, the head waiter, enters from the service, carrying a bottle of Vittel. He regards FRED with disapproval.

GEORGE. Now then, now then!

FRED (*coming away from the window*). I was only looking out of the window, Mr. 'Oskins.

GEORGE. I know you was. That's why I made the ejaculation. 'Ow do you think you're going to get on in the world and make a name for yourself if you stand at the window all day, with your 'ands in your pockets, gaping at girls!

FRED. There aren't any girls to gape at.

GEORGE. Well, what *was* you gaping at? God's beautiful earth?

FRED. No. I wanted to see if anybody was coming from the station.

GEORGE. Would anybody be likely to come 'ere?

FRED. Well, Mr. Penn come. And 'is daughter.

GEORGE. Yes, but they're Americans! They come because they think this place is quaint. It seems there aren't any quaint places in America, so they 'ave to come 'ere to amuse themselves. They think I'm quaint. They think you're quaint. They think we're all quaint. 'Ere, put this . . . soft drink on Mr. Penn's table.

[*With an air of disgust, he hands the bottle of Vittel to FRED, who places it on the one table which seems likely to be used.*]

FRED. Why do they call it soft drink, Mr. 'Oskins?

GEORGE. God, in 'Is 'Eavenly Wisdom, only knows!

[Enter JACOB PENN, *a man of sallow complexion and generally unhealthy appearance. His age is about sixty.*]

PENN. Have you seen my daughter, George?

GEORGE. No, sir, I 'aven't, not since you went out together, sir, I 'ope you 'aven't lost 'er.

PENN. No, she's lost me.

GEORGE. Ah, that's a different thing, sir. She'll turn up all right. Miss Penn knows her way about.

PENN. That sounds as if you thought I didn't.

GEORGE. Oh, no, sir—not at all. But Miss Penn's remarkably efficient, sir, remarkably efficient. I can imagine you being lost, sir, but I can't imagine 'er. As the French say, sir, Chairchey la femme!

PENN. What about luncheon? That dinner last night was terrible.

GEORGE. I'm sorry to 'ear that, sir.

PENN. Terrible! I don't know what's happened to England since the days of Charles Dickens. The food is awful, but unless Dickens was a liar, the food used to be good. Do you think he was a liar, George?

GEORGE. 'E was a nauthor, sir.

PENN. Well, you'll have to try and do a bit better. The cabbage last night was an insult to the whole vegetable world! Sodden, that's what it was, sodden! All the vegetable juices were boiled out of it. I've had the most terrible indigestion all morning.

GEORGE. Have you tried bicarbonate of soda, sir?

PENN. That was my breakfast this morning. I hope my daughter gets back in time for luncheon. Irregular hours of eating are bad for the digestion, George.

GEORGE. Yes, sir, I've 'eard that.

PENN. I'll just go and see if I can locate her.

[*Exit PENN.*

GEORGE (*to FRED*). Fred, let that be an object lesson to you. Cast away ambition, my boy, and keep an 'earty appetite. I may be poor, but thank God I enjoy my food.

FRED. All the same, Mr. 'Oskins, I'd be willing to 'ave 'is complaint if I 'ad 'is money.

GEORGE. You'll probably get 'is complaint without 'is money. (*Going to the window and looking out.*) Goo' Lor', someone is coming!

FRED. 'Ere?

GEORGE (*busiling away from the window*). Yes. Come on, look as if you was wore out with work.

FRED. Is it someone to stay or only to lunch?

GEORGE. 'Ow the 'ell do I know? When 'e comes in and says: "Can I 'ave some lunch 'ere?" look a bit doobious, see, and say you'll ask the 'ead waiter, see?

FRED. All right, Mr. 'Oskins!

[GEORGE goes out by the service-door, leaving FRED to improvise great industry. A moment later, MR. HUBERT DUNWOODY, the well-known and popular novelist, enters. His age is about thirty-six, and he is a plump person in peril of becoming a corpulent one. His appearance, except that he is smartly dressed, is not otherwise distinguished.]

DUNWOODY. Oh, waiter!

FRED. Yes, sir!

DUNWOODY. Can I have lunch here?

FRED. Yes, sir. I'll tell the 'ead waiter you've arrived.

DUNWOODY. Were you expecting me?

FRED. Oh, no, sir, we never expect anyone! . . .

[Enter GEORGE, furiously glaring at FRED.

GEORGE (*aside to FRED*). You B.F.! (*to DUNWOODY.*) Good morning, sir!

[FRED, crestfallen and resentful, retires to the door, where he stands in an attitude of ill-simulated alertness.]

DUNWOODY. Oh, good morning! Can I have lunch here?

GEORGE (*considering*). I think I can squeeze you in, sir! Yes, I think so! Are you just lunching or are you staying with us for a period?

DUNWOODY. Well, that depends!

GEORGE. Quite so, sir!

DUNWOODY. Is there an American gentleman, a Mr. Penn, staying here?

GEORGE. Yes, sir.

DUNWOODY. With his daughter?

GEORGE. She's 'ere, too, sir.

DUNWOODY. H'm! Well, I think I'll stay. I left my suit-case at the station. Can you send someone for it?

GEORGE. One of the outdoor staff will convey it 'ere for you.

DUNWOODY. When will lunch be ready?

GEORGE. We serve it from one to three, sir. Mr. Penn generally 'as 'is precisely at one. Very punctual gentleman, Mr. Penn, although considering what 'e 'as to eat, punctuality 'ardly seems necessary. A couple of digestive biscuits and a spoonful of semolina, sir, is as much as 'e ever touches.

DUNWOODY. Well, well, well! It's very nice to be here again!

GEORGE. 'Ave you been 'ere before, sir?

DUNWOODY. Yes, a long time ago.

GEORGE. Things was diff'rent then, sir. This was a Ninn, then, but what is it now? A mere place of call for char-a-bangs an' 'ikers. They bring their food with them, sir. Do you know, sir, I've seen 'ikers come an'.eat their 'am sandwiches on my seat outside, an' then come in an' ask if they can use the lavatory.

DUNWOODY. Pretty cool, I must say!

GEORGE. As I said to the last lot, I'm not the relieving officer! People's very miscellaneous nowadays! It's all due to this 'ere demockeracy! De-mock-er-a-cy! Huh! Give me the good old days when a gentleman *was* a gentleman, and not a friend and a brother! Then you knew where you was. A gentleman, 'e treated you as an inferior and gave you 'alf-a-crown to prove it, but these 'ere demerocrats treats you as an equal an' gives you tuppence. An' you're damn lucky to get that!

DUNWOODY. I see! I'd like to wash.

GEORGE. Fred, show the gentleman! . . .

DUNWOODY. Oh, and you'll hurry with my suit-case, will you?

GEORGE. Fred'll see to it, sir.

DUNWOODY (*to FRED*). Don't bump it about. I don't want it damaged.

FRED. No, sir. (*They go out.*)

GEORGE (*solus*). Affable sort of gent, 'e is. One of the
Noo Rich, I expect. [Enter FRED.]

FRED. There's another gent comin' up the street.

GEORGE. Where is 'e? (*Going to the window.*)

FRED. By the Cross.

GEORGE (*in disgust*). Huh, pack on 'is back. 'E don't
look up to much. One of these middle-class tramps 'avin'
a 'oliday with wild Nature. Bread an' cheese, I expect.
Tuppence, my boy, that's all you'll get from 'im.

[ANTHONY FAIR enters. *He is a pleasant-looking young man, slimly built, with quick, observant eyes and an air of absolute assurance. His age is about thirty. His tweed suit is now dusty and slightly dishevelled, for he has been walking since breakfast, but it is an expensive suit and very becoming to its wearer. It does not look like the sort of tweed suit worn by a young gentleman in the chorus of a musical comedy. He carries a pack on his back.*]

FAIR. Can I have lunch here?

FRED. I'll ask the 'ead waiter, sir.

GEORGE. It'll be ready almost immediate, sir. I'll just
take your 'at.

FAIR (*handing it to him*). Thanks! And this. (*Unstraps pack.*)

GEORGE (*passing these on to FRED*). Fred, 'ang these up.
[Exit FRED with pack and hat.]

FAIR. What sort of a season are you having?

GEORGE. Season! We 'aven't 'ad a season 'ere since
before the War. An' I don't suppose we'll ever 'ave
another. [Re-enter FRED who begins to lay a table.]

FAIR. Oh, cheer up, William!

GEORGE. George, sir, if you don't mind.

FAIR. I beg your pardon, George, but you reminded
me of a waiter called William!

GEORGE. Oh! Well, my name's George, sir, not
William.

FAIR. And a very good name, too, George. I'm sorry
you're having a bad season.

GEORGE. It's all right, sir. I'm used to it.

[Exit GEORGE.]

FAIR (*to FRED*). What's your name?

FRED. Fred, sir!

FAIR. Well, Fred, you will never be known as Frederick the Great if you lay a table like that.

FRED. What's wrong with it, sir?

FAIR. Oh, Fred! Fred! That's not worthy of you! You can do much better than that. Now, come, you're an intelligent-looking chap. Have a look at it! Not quite up to your usual form, is it?

FRED. Well, no, sir, it ain't! To tell you the truth, sir, I'm fed-up. There's no life 'ere.

FAIR. Where do you want to go?

FRED. Well, I did think of 'Astings, sir!

FAIR. Ah, you're ambitious! But, my dear Fred, you'll never do for Hastings if you can't lay a table better than that. Look! (*He arranges it for him.*) That's better, isn't it?

FRED. Yes, sir.

FAIR. Well, why didn't you do it like that at first? For all you know, I might be the owner of a hotel at Hastings, looking out for talent!

FRED. Are you, sir?

FAIR. No, but if I were, Fred, I think I'd give you a job. You've got brains, Frederick.

FRED. I know I 'ave, sir, but I've never 'ad a chance to develop them.

FAIR. Well, this is the place to develop them. (*Enter GEORGE.*) Isn't it, George?

GEORGE. Isn't what, sir?

FAIR. Isn't this the place to develop a man's brains?

GEORGE. I don't quite understand your meaning, sir.

FAIR. Fred complains that this job doesn't give him a chance to develop his mind!

GEORGE. Mind!

FAIR. Yes.

GEORGE. First I've 'eard of it!

FAIR. But I said that a young fellow like him ought to be glad of a chance to work under an experienced man like you. I don't suppose there's a thing you don't know about this business.

GEORGE. You're right, sir. There isn't!

FAIR. What did I say? Take it from me, Fred, as

one who knows the world, you'll probably learn more from George here in six months than you'd learn in Hastings in six years!

GEORGE. That's what I'm always telling 'im, sir.

[Enter DUNWOODY.]

FAIR. Good afternoon.

DUNWOODY (*coldly*). Good afternoon. (*To GEORGE*.) Is lunch ready yet?

GEORGE. Not quite, sir!

DUNWOODY. Late, isn't it? Have Mr. Penn and his daughter returned yet?

GEORGE. No, sir.

DUNWOODY. Well, don't tell them I'm here.

GEORGE. I won't, sir. I don't know your name.

DUNWOODY. Dunwoody! Hubert Dunwoody! Perhaps you've heard of me.

GEORGE. No, sir, I 'aven't!

FAIR. Are you the Mr. Dunwoody?

DUNWOODY (*beaming with quiet pride*). I'm a Mr. Dunwoody. Waiter, you won't forget, will you? Not a word to Mr. Penn or his daughter. I want to surprise them.

GEORGE. Very good, sir. (*Exit DUNWOODY*.) Do you know him, sir?

FAIR. He's a well-known novelist. I've often seen his photograph in the newspapers.

GEORGE (*despondently*). Oh, a nauthor!

FAIR. Don't you approve of authors?

GEORGE. No, sir, I do not. I don't 'old with literature in any shape or form. I never 'ave, and I never shall. I know what 'e's come for.

FAIR. Oh! What?

GEORGE. Local colour! That's what these authors calls it. They come down 'ere and listen to my remarks and go away and put 'em in a book and make their fortune. But do they give me anything for my 'elp? No, sir, they do not. The most I get out of any of 'em is a book that I don't want and can't read! . . .

FAIR. Can't read! Are you illiterate?

GEORGE. No, sir, I'm decent. Some of these books they write nowadays—well, I'm not squeamish, sir, but, my God, they give me a turn.

FAIR. Many people staying here?

GEORGE. Not what you'd call a lot, sir. Two persons, to be precise. And, of course, this author gentleman.

FAIR. I see. The Mr. Penn and his daughter of whom Mr. Dunwoody was speaking.

GEORGE. Yes, sir. The American gentleman. They say 'e's a millionaire, and I believe it. Any'ow, 'ere's what 'e drinks! (*He exhibits the bottle of Vittel.*) Only a millionaire 'ud 'ave the nerve to drink that stuff in what is, in a manner of speaking, sir, a public-'ouse.

FAIR. What's Miss Penn like? Attractive?

GEORGE. She's American, sir. Very attractive. And vivacious, if I may use the expression. Full of joy de viver!

FAIR. Married?

GEORGE. No, sir.

FAIR. Is she engaged?

GEORGE. Excuse me, sir, but aren't you taking a lot of interest in the young lady?

FAIR. Yes, I am. Is she engaged?

GEORGE. She 'asn't mentioned it to me! . . .

FAIR. Then she can't be. She'd have told you all about it if she were! You've got a fatherly face, William! . . .

GEORGE. George, sir! George!

FAIR. I beg you pardon, George. What's her Christian name?

GEORGE. Anna, sir.

FAIR. With the aitch or without it?

GEORGE. Anna, sir. Without the aitch. She's teaching me English at present! . . .

FAIR. Oh!

GEORGE. Yes, sir. As it's spoke in New York. It seems that in America, sir, an Englishman is expected to sound his aitches where 'e oughtn't, and as Miss Penn thinks of taking me back to New York as 'er father's butler, she's teaching me 'ow to do it. Every morning I 'ave to say a little piece. Ho, Hi Ham Habsolutely Hun Hable to Hexpress Hany Hopinion Hon Hanything Hat Hall. I find it very 'ard to do, sir! Miss Penn says nobody in America'll believe a butler is English unless he talks it.

[*Re-enter PENN.*

PENN. My daughter returned yet, George?

GEORGE. No, sir, not yet she 'asn't!

PENN. It's too bad of Anna. (*To FAIR.*) Good morning! [Exit GEORGE.]

FAIR. Good morning! I hope you're having a pleasant time in England.

PENN. No, I am not. Your climate isn't what I'm accustomed to.

FAIR. To-day is very beautiful.

PENN. Yes, but for how long? Your climate don't stay put like any regular climate! Now, in America when the rain starts it doesn't stop till it's done, but here the damned thing leaves off before it's done, and when it's got you tempted outside, it starts again and soaks you through. I don't call that weather.

FAIR. It's very unexpected!

PENN. You're right, and I don't like things that I don't expect.

FAIR. Well, I hope it'll settle itself while you're here!

PENN. Of course, England is England.

FAIR. You're quite right!

PENN. And I don't expect things to be the way they are back home.

FAIR. Of course not. You see, we're not a very enterprising race. We like to understand things before we do them.

PENN. Well, I must go along and get myself ready for luncheon! (*Enter GEORGE.*) When my daughter comes in, tell her I'm upstairs and that I'm vexed.

GEORGE. I will, sir, if you think it'll do any good!

PENN. I don't, but I'd like her to know. [Exit.

FAIR. Mr. Penn seems to be a bright and cheerful gentleman, George! He must liven up the inn a lot!

GEORGE. 'E don't, but 'is daughter do!

[ANNA appears at the window. She is a beautiful American girl, about twenty-four years of age, charmingly dressed and full of life. She is a spoiled girl, of course, for her parents, with that fatuous affection which distinguishes American from all other parents, have indulged her from her birth. Nevertheless, ANNA is a darling. No wonder ANTHONY FAIR immediately falls in love with her.]

ANTHONY AND ANNA

ANNA. Say, George, have you seen my father?

GEORGE. Yes, miss, 'e's upstairs, and 'e's vexed.

ANNA. Why don't you say upstair? I keep on telling you.

GEORGE. I shall never be able to do it, miss.

ANNA. You don't try. What's he vexed about?

GEORGE. You, miss. 'E says you lost 'im, and it was only with the 'elp of 'Eaven that 'e found 'is way 'ome again.

ANNA. You are quaint, George. You're a regular old family heirloom. Look out, I'm coming through this way.

[*She scrambles through the window, and just as she swings her legs over the sill, she loses her balance and stumbles. But ANTHONY catches her in time.*

GEORGE (*really anxious about her*). 'Ave you 'urt yourself, miss?

ANNA. No, thank you, George. (*To ANTHONY*.) Thank you!

ANTHONY. It's much safer to come through the door.

ANNA. But not so amusing. I've had a perfectly lovely walk, George.

GEORGE. 'Ave you, miss?

ANNA. England's a very romantic country.

GEORGE. Yes, miss. Lunch will soon be ready.

ANNA. I don't believe you have any romance anywhere in you at all.

GEORGE. No, miss, I 'aven't. But I 'ad once.

ANNA. Well, what happened to it?

GEORGE. It was took out of me by my environment, miss. There's times, miss, when the 'ole of 'umanity seems to me like a great big mouth, swallerin' things.

ANNA. George, you're perfectly horrible! (*Aside to him*.) Who's the stranger?

GEORGE. I don't know his name, miss.

ANNA. Well, find out.

GEORGE. Very good, miss! (*To FAIR*.) Excuse me, sir, but if you're staying, per'aps you'll sign the register.

FAIR. Can you bring it here?

GEORGE. Certainly, sir!

[*He goes out. ANTHONY, who has been staring hard at ANNA, now stares harder at her.*]

ANNA. I guess you'll know me the next time we meet. Don't you know it's rude to stare at people like that?

FAIR. A blind man would stare at you. You're the most attractive woman I've ever met in my life.

ANNA. And you're the freshest man I've ever met in mine. Good afternoon!

FAIR. Good afternoon!

ANNA (*at the door*). Are you taking lunch here?

FAIR. Are you?

ANNA. Yes.

FAIR. So am I. By the way, you don't know my name.

ANNA. What makes you think I want to know it?

FAIR. I heard you asking George. It's Fair. Anthony Fair.

ANNA. There's not much of the reticent Englishman about you, Mr. Fair. You're the most unreticent man I've ever met. I don't think I like you.

FAIR. Well, you haven't known me long. When you're more accustomed to me! . . .

ANNA. I haven't any intention of getting accustomed to you. I suppose you think I'm a simple-minded American girl just waiting for an Englishman to say a kind word to her.

FAIR. Do you come from America?

ANNA. I certainly do.

FAIR. How splendid! Tell me, is the Statue of Liberty still there? (*She has taken a cigarette out of her case.*)

FAIR (*striking a match*). Allow me! (*She lights her cigarette at his match.*) You smoke too much!

ANNA. What do you mean—smoke too much?

FAIR. Look at your fingers! Yellow with nicotine. Nasty!

ANNA. Well, you've got a nerve! . . .

[Enter GEORGE with the register.]

GEORGE. 'Ere you are, sir!

ANNA. All right, George! I know his name, and I don't like it.

[Exit.]

[GEORGE puts the register down.]

GEORGE. I said she was a lively young piece, didn't I, sir?

[FRED enters.]

FRED. Cook says lunch is all ready to serve, Mr. 'Oskins.

GEORGE. Well, sound the gong then! (FRED goes out.) We always sound the gong, sir, whether there's anybody 'ere or not. It sort of puts 'eart in the establishment.

[*A sepulchral sound is heard. FRED is beating the gong.*]

FAIR. Does that noise put heart into you, George?

GEORGE. Yes, sir, but then I always 'ad a taste for melancholia, sir.

[Enter DUNWOODY, *pleasurably anticipating his lunch.*]

FAIR We meet again.

DUNWOODY. Yes, we do.

FAIR (*as he goes towards the door*). But only to part.

DUNWOODY. You're going?

FAIR. To powder my nose.

GEORGE. A very infectious gentleman, that, very infectious. Where will you sit, sir?

DUNWOODY. Where do the Penns usually sit?

GEORGE (*indicating the Penns' table*). 'Ere, sir.

DUNWOODY. Well, then, I'll sit at this table, with my back to the door, so that they won't see me when they come in. I want to surprise them.

GEORGE. I expect you will, sir. What'll you 'ave, sir?

DUNWOODY. Oh, the lunch, the lunch, whatever it is.

GEORGE. Very good, sir.

DUNWOODY. By the way, that gentleman who has just gone out, is he staying long?

GEORGE. I don't know, sir!

DUNWOODY. H'm! Tiresome!

[Enter ANNA, followed by her father. DUNWOODY hurriedly sits down at his table. GEORGE goes off to the service.]

ANNA (*as she sits down*). My goodness, there's Mr. Dunwoody!

PENN. So it is.

DUNWOODY (*springing from his seat and going to them*). My dear Miss Penn! How do you do? This is a surprise! And Mr. Penn! How are you?

PENN. Bad!

DUNWOODY. Oh, I'm so sorry!

PENN. But no worse than usual. How are you?

DUNWOODY. Oh, splendid, splendid! You know I'm almost ashamed to be so healthy.

ANNA. You're writing under false pretences, Mr. Dunwoody. All the best authors have at least got epilepsy, but you don't seem to have anything.

DUNWOODY. I know, I know! I feel that I ought to develop an incurable disease, but I go on being absurdly fit.

PENN. Have you been writing any more lately?

DUNWOODY. Yes! Yes, I have a little thing I'm doing now. I've come down here to finish it. Really, you know, London's an impossible place for a writer. So much publicity, so many invitations for lunch and dinner! And then the interviews and the paragraphs in the newspapers —very distracting! Publicity, Mr. Penn, is dreadful, dreadful!

ANNA. I wish I were a writer.

DUNWOODY. My dear Miss Penn, why wish to be anything but what you so charmingly are? Many women can write, and, alas, do; but how few women can be charming!

[Enter GEORGE, followed by FRED. GEORGE carries plates of roast beef. FRED has the vegetable-dishes.]

GEORGE (to DUNWOODY). Your lunch is ready, sir.

ANNA. Come and have it at our table.

DUNWOODY. That would be delightful, but shan't I be crowding you?

PENN. Not at all.

[FAIR enters and sits at an adjoining table. Throughout the following scene he and ANNA are intensely aware of each other.]

ANNA. George, bring Mr. Dunwoody's lunch here.

GEORGE. Very good, miss. Fred!

[FRED makes the transfer, while GEORGE attends to FAIR.]

GEORGE (to FAIR). And what'll you 'ave, sir?

FAIR. What is there?

GEORGE. Roast beef, sir.

FAIR. Anything else?

GEORGE. No, sir.

FAIR. Then I'll have some roast beef.

GEORGE. Thank you, sir.

ANNA (*to DUNWOODY*). We've had roast beef every day since we arrived in this hotel, except once, when we had boiled beef.

[*For the rest of the scene, GEORGE and FRED do what is required of them in the way of service.*]

DUNWOODY. Aren't you tired of it?

ANNA. No, I like it. What charms me most about Europe is its monotony. These effete civilizations are very restful to an American.

DUNWOODY. Effete?

ANNA. Yes—Europe generally, and England especially. It does us good to get into an effete atmosphere every once in a while. It helps us to go back and cope with America. The monotony of European diet is very soothing to the American stomach! . . .

PENN. Palate, honey, palate!

ANNA. When I'm in England, father, I speak as the English do. What was I saying? Father, you've put me clean off my argument.

PENN. I'm sorry, honey. I beg your pardon.

FAIR. You were speaking of the monotony of Europe just before you began to discuss the American . . . palate.

PENN (*rising and bowing to FAIR*). On my daughter's behalf, sir, I thank you.

ANNA. I thank you on my own behalf.

FAIR (*rising and bowing to her*). Not at all, not at all.

[*DUNWOODY, uncertain what to do, half rises and then resumes his seat.*]

ANNA (*to DUNWOODY*). I ate so many omelettes in France that I feel I shall never again be able to look a hen straight in the face. Here, in England, I've had porridge for breakfast every morning, followed by bacon and eggs, and when I think of the millions of people who are doing the same thing day after day in this island, I am surprised that there are any hogs left in the world. Now, in America, we have thirty-seven different sorts of breakfast cereals, and, believe me, it is the most bothersome thing to decide which of the thirty-seven you'll have. That's where Europe has America beat, Mr. Dunwoody. You don't have any variety, and so you don't have any worry.

DUNWOODY. I'm afraid you haven't been in Europe very long, Miss Penn.

ANNA. I've been in it nine weeks. That's about as long as you were in America when you wrote your book on the future of the United States. And I've seen more of Europe than you saw of America. I've been in England, France, Germany, Czechoslovakia, Italy, and Spain. And I spent a couple of hours in Switzerland, changing trains. I *have* seen the place.

GEORGE (*to Mr. PENN*). Which will you 'ave, sir—the charcoal or the digestive biscuits?

PENN. Two charcoal biscuits, George.

GEORGE. Very good, sir!

DUNWOODY. Two what?

PENN. Charcoal biscuits!

ANNA. Father's feeling hilarious to-day, so he's going to have an orgy!

PENN. Nervous dyspepsia, Mr. Dunwoody, and it's chronic.

FAIR. I beg your pardon, but how many sorts of cereals did you say you have in America?

ANNA. Thirty-seven.

FAIR. Thank you.

ANNA. Can you beat it?

FAIR. No.

ANNA. Father, I forgot to introduce you to Mr. Fair.

PENN. Who?

ANNA. This gentleman! Mr. Fair! He keeps on interrupting, so I suppose he wants to join the party. I want to have you meet my father, Mr. Fair. (*The men have all risen.*)

FAIR. How do you do, sir.

PENN. I'm very glad to make your acquaintance, Mr. Fair. Mr. Fair and I met earlier in the morning, Anna, but I wasn't aware you knew him.

ANNA. I didn't then. (*To FAIR.*) I guess you know Mr. Dunwoody. He's one of your most eminent authors!

DUNWOODY (*modestly*). Oh, Miss Penn!

FAIR. I recognized Mr. Dunwoody the moment I saw him.

ANNA. Won't you come and join us? It seems so

unsociable for you to be sitting there by yourself, and us sitting here with Mr. Dunwoody. Of course, it's very English!

FAIR. Thank you! (*He carries his chair to the Penns' table, while GEORGE and FRED transfer the plates, etc.*)

PENN. Is there anybody else in the hotel, Anna?

ANNA. I'll ask George.

PENN. No, honey, don't. There might be.

GEORGE. We've had quite an influx to-day, sir. Almost pre-war.

ANNA. Father's afraid people'll want to share his lunch.

PENN (*to FAIR*). I suffer from nervous dyspepsia. I haven't enjoyed a square meal for ten years.

FAIR. Good God! . . . I beg your pardon!

PENN. Not at all! You've expressed my feelings exactly. The minute I eat anything solid, Mr. Fair, I get a stabbing pain in the pit of my . . .

ANNA. Palate, father!

DUNWOODY. But can't you do anything for it? I read in a newspaper once . . .

PENN. Don't talk to me about newspapers!

DUNWOODY. Why? Don't you believe what you read in them?

PENN. No, I own three.

DUNWOODY. Ah, but this was an English paper. It said that Mr. Gladstone chewed his food at least thirty times.

FAIR. I've often wondered why Queen Victoria didn't like him.

ANNA. It must have unnerved her to see his jaws working.

PENN. Mr. Dunwoody, I've chewed my food until it was tasteless, but it made no difference to me. I've tried every sort of medicine and food there is—soft food and hard food, pre-digested food and raw food. I've starved myself and I've over-eaten myself. I've invented a patent food which has cured most everybody except me. The only thing that gives me any relief at all is a charcoal biscuit invented by a trade rival.

FAIR. Have you ever tried eating ordinary food like an ordinary person?

PENN. That's how I contracted dyspepsia. Ordinary Americans eat canned food. Hence my stomach.

DUNWOODY. How on earth did you get into this state?

PENN. Through worry and work. You see before you, gentlemen, a victim of the work habit. I never took enough time over my meals and hardly any exercise, because I wanted to get back to my business as quickly as possible. The result is that I am a millionaire and have hardly any stomach to speak about.

FAIR. Tell me, Mr. Penn, are you very rich?

PENN. I'm so rich that I can never be poor. When I go to bed I'm richer than I was when I got up. When I get up, I'm richer than I was when I went to bed. You can't realize what power that gives me. I can sit in my office in the Middle West of America and starve thousands of men and women here in Europe without getting out of my chair. I'd like to see the king who could do that.

DUNWOODY. It's a great responsibility.

FAIR. Well, if a king hasn't got your power, Mr. Penn, perhaps he thanks God he hasn't got your stomach.

PENN. Perhaps so. But I reckon it's better to have no stomach than to have no authority.

ANNA. What do you do, Mr. Fair?

FAIR. Do?

ANNA. Yes. How do you earn a living? Father works, Mr. Dunwoody writes—what do you do?

FAIR. I'm an adventurer!

ANNA. What's that?

FAIR. I live by my wits.

PENN. We all do that. That's why most people are poor.

ANNA. Do you make anything out of it?

FAIR. My income fluctuates considerably.

ANNA. Tell us what sort of work you do?

PENN (*reprovingly*). Honey! . . .

ANNA. I'd like to know just what he does. Are you a conjurer or a clergyman or what are you?

FAIR. I'll tell you the story of my life! . . .

DUNWOODY (*rising*). Really, I! . . .

ANNA (*pushing him back into his seat*). Sit down, Mr. Dunwoody, and listen. This'll mebbe be real, live copy for you. (*To FAIR.*) Will it take long?

FAIR. No. I can cut it short. I have always had a strong, I may say an overpowering, objection to work.

PENN. That don't sound moral.

FAIR. So everybody says—but I'm not expounding morals: I'm stating facts.

PENN. Work is a serious subject, Mr. Fair. I don't like the way you talk about it.

DUNWOODY. I'm sure Mr. Fair is chaffing us. All healthy-minded men like work.

FAIR. Well, why don't you give up writing novels and do some? I'm healthy-minded, but I detest work. It is only morbid and unhealthy people who want to toil from morning to night.

ANNA. Are you referring to my father?

FAIR. Well, is his stomach a testimonial to the joy of labour? Work was originated as a punishment for sin. I've repented. On behalf of Adam and Eve, I apologize for the Fall, and I ask that the human race be let off the rest of the sentence.

PENN. You've forgotten that man worked before the Fall.

FAIR. A little amateur gardening! I don't call that work.

PENN. Mr. Fair, work is man's great heritage. It is more than that. It is his greatest privilege! . . .

FAIR. Well, I'm willing to go without mine.

PENN. I suppose you're one of the idle rich?

FAIR. No, unfortunately, I'm one of the idle poor.

PENN. Well, how do you get your money?

ANNA. Are you a crook?

PENN. } Anna, you're forgetting yourself!

DUNWOODY. } My dear Miss Penn!

FAIR. Yes, in a sense, I am.

ANNA. What do you mean by that? If a man's a crook he's a crook. There's no other sense about it.

FAIR. Judge for yourself. When I left Oxford! . . .

ANNA. Were you at Oxford?

FAIR. Yes, but I hope you won't feel annoyed about it!

ANNA. No, I shan't. I just love motor-cars!

PENN. Go on, Mr. Fair!

FAIR. Well, when I left Oxford, an old aunt of mine died and left me fifteen hundred pounds.

PENN. What did you do with it?

FAIR. I spent it. She took a lifetime to save it. I spent it in eighteen months, and I got more fun out of it than she did.

ANNA. What did you do then?

FAIR. I took the laziest job in the world—selling motor-cars—but I didn't like the people who bought them, and I resigned. Then the slump hit me, and I tried to write gossip for the newspapers, but I didn't like to betray my friends so I looked about for an honest job. I couldn't find one! . . .

ANNA. So you became a crook!

FAIR. Before we go any further, I'd like to say that I have a great wish to finish one speech without being interrupted. Do you think, Miss Penn, you could keep quiet for five minutes?

ANNA. Now, that's downright impertinent. Father! . . .

PENN. Mr. Fair, I admit that you have had great provocation, but in America no man ever speaks that way to a woman.

FAIR. Well, isn't it time someone began? Why don't you start a man's movement in America?

ANNA. You'd better go over and try.

FAIR. That's an idea! How many women are there in the United States?

PENN. About fifty millions all told!

FAIR. No. No, I couldn't do it.

DUNWOODY. I'm sure Mr. Fair is very busy. Oughtn't we to break up?

ANNA. He doesn't do any work. And anyway we can't stop just when the talk's beginning to be interesting.

DUNWOODY. But is it?

ANNA. Certainly. He's insulted me. [→]I call that interesting. Go on, Mr. Fair; tell us what induced you to become a crook! . . .

PENN. Honey, honey! . . .

FAIR. I will . . . on one condition: that you keep quiet until I've finished.

ANNA. That's inhuman.

FAIR (*rising*). Then if you'll excuse me, I think I'll act on Mr. Dunwoody's suggestion. Good afternoon!

ANNA. You aren't going, are you?

FAIR. I am.

GEORGE. You 'aven't 'ad your coffee yet, sir.

FAIR. I'll have it outside in the garden. . . .

GEORGE. It looks like rain, sir.

ANNA. You'll have your coffee right here, Mr. Fair! . . .

FAIR. You know, Mr. Penn, your daughter talks too much! . . .

ANNA. } Oh, father!

PENN. } Mr. Fair!

DUNWOODY. } Really!

FAIR. And now, George, I'll have my coffee in the garden.

GEORGE. Yes, sir. Some'ow I don't think the rain'll do *you* any 'arm, sir. [Exit.

FAIR. Oh, by the way, Mr. Penn, I think I can cure your complaint.

PENN. I don't think you can.

FAIR. If I succeed in making you enjoy your Sunday dinner! . . .

PENN. That's a physical impossibility.

FAIR. I don't think so. I'll begin your treatment at six o'clock to-morrow morning. It won't cost you anything. I'll come and call you then. Perhaps you'd like to come with us, Dunwoody.

DUNWOODY. I think not.

FAIR. Anyhow, I'll call you. We'll swim in the river for twenty minutes or half an hour. Then we'll walk for an hour and a half. By one o'clock you'll be ready for some food.

PENN. Don't we have any breakfast?

FAIR. No.

ANNA. What about me? Don't I come into this?

FAIR. You, Miss Penn, will stay in bed and rest. Good afternoon. Oh, thank you for asking me to your table. It was most kind. Good afternoon!

PENN. Good afternoon. [Exit FAIR.

ANNA. Well, if that man isn't the end of everything!

PENN. Honey, you were not so polished in your conduct as you ought to have been.

ANNA. After what he said to me, father, I consider my polish was superb.

[GEORGE, carrying a coffee-tray, enters.

GEORGE. Coffee, miss?

ANNA (as she takes a cup). Do you think it'll rain soon, George?

GEORGE. I 'ave the 'ighest 'opes of the weather, miss.

ANNA. If you can spill some of Mr. Fair's coffee over his pants, I'll be grateful to you.

GEORGE. I *could* manage it, miss; but some'ow I don't think it would improve matters. (*He is serving PENN and DUNWOODY.*)

ANNA. Well, do what you can, anyway!

GEORGE. Very good, miss! 'E's rather a nice young gentleman.

ANNA. I don't think so.

GEORGE. No? Well, that's a pity, miss. (*He goes out.*)

DUNWOODY. Personally, Miss Penn, if I were you, I should avoid the fellow. I hate to say anything against a countryman, but I feel certain that he is not a person to be encouraged. I'm afraid this Mr. Fair was speaking the exact truth when he described himself as an adventurer. I do warn you against mixing yourself up with him. Just ignore him.

ANNA. I don't want to ignore him. I want to hurt him and humiliate him.

PENN. I rather liked the young man. He sort of stimulated me.

ANNA. What'd he say I smoked too much for?

DUNWOODY. Did he say that? What impertinence!

ANNA. He said my fingers were yellow with nicotine.

PENN. Well, so they are, honey. I don't wish to be disrespectful to your profession, Mr. Dunwoody—I have a great respect for literary talent—but Anna here got herself associated with a lot of common writing people in New York, and she hasn't stopped smoking since. If you have an American author to dinner, he'll start shouting for cigarettes the minute the soup's served. The women are worse than the men; they start smoking with the cocktails.

[*Re-enter GEORGE.*

ANNA. What's he doing, George?

GEORGE. When I last observed him, miss, 'e was just smiling.

ANNA. At me, I guess. The skunk! (*Looking at her fingers.*) Would pumice-stone take it off, do you think?

GEORGE. Take what off, miss?

ANNA. This nicotine.

DUNWOODY. My dear Miss Penn, surely you are not thinking seriously of what this fellow said?

ANNA. George, would pumice-stone take it off?

[FAIR returns while ANNA is putting her question to GEORGE.]

FAIR. It would in time!

ANNA (*coldly*). Pardon me, I was addressing George.

FAIR. He'll tell you exactly the same. Won't you, George?

GEORGE. I'm afraid, sir, I am not an authority on ladies' toilet.

ANNA. Mr. Dunwoody, will you take me for a walk?

DUNWOODY. I shall be delighted!

FAIR. It's going to rain.

ANNA. I like rain. Mr. Dunwoody, will you get my waterproof for me? It is hanging in the hall.

DUNWOODY. Certainly.

FAIR. You ought to put on goloshes. The roads are wet.

ANNA (*coldly*). I beg your pardon!

FAIR (*repeating his remark*). You ought to put on galoshes.

ANNA. You mean rubbers. And mind your own business.

FAIR. I beg your pardon!

[Re-enter DUNWOODY with waterproof. *He is wearing his own.*]

DUNWOODY. Here you are.

ANNA. Thank you, Mr. Dunwoody. (*He helps her to put the waterproof on.*) I don't suppose it'll rain. But we may as well be prepared for it.

DUNWOODY. Quite! Oh, quite! In England, it is always as well to be prepared for the worst.

ANNA (*with a glance at FAIR*). That's just what I was thinking! [Exit ANNA and DUNWOODY.

GEORGE (*aside to FAIR*). You 'andled that situation very badly, sir!

FAIR. Think so?

GEORGE. Well, per'aps not—per'aps not!

PENN. I'm just going upstairs to lie down, Mr. Fair; but I'd like to have another talk with you this evening about your scheme for curing me. I'm always willing to take a chance. Perhaps you'll come up to my sitting-room about half-past three.

FAIR. Very good, Mr. Penn.

PENN. Until then! (*He goes out.*)

FAIR. George, if you were me, and you were very much in love with a lady, how would you court her? Would you be soft and submissive, or bold and truculent?

GEORGE. In my opinion, sir, there's two ways to woo any female that is a female.

FAIR. What are they?

GEORGE. Well, there's the iron 'and in the velvet glove, sir, and, as the French say, there's l'audassy, l'audassy, toojours l'audassy. Anything else, sir?

FAIR. Yes. Bring me the register.

GEORGE (*fetching it for him.*). Then you're going to stay with us, sir?

FAIR. Yes. for an indefinite period!

THE SECOND ACT

We are now in the public sitting-room of the Inn of St. Peter's Finger. The time is Sunday afternoon towards tea-time. Rain is falling, and GEORGE bustles in, as the curtain rises, to close the windows. Having done so, he takes a look at the fire and, muttering "Fires in July! These Americans ought to carry fires about with them!" goes over to the grate and stirs up the coals. While he is doing this, the door opens and MR. PENN enters. He has been for a long walk with ANTHONY FAIR.

PENN (*throwing himself down in a chair*). Gee, I'm tired!

GEORGE. 'As e'ad you out again, sir? [Enter FAIR.

FAIR. I have, George, and to-morrow morning I shall take you for a walk, too.

GEORGE. No, sir, I don't think so. I'm too old for acrobatics.

FAIR (*to PENN*). That's the nicest thing George has said since I came here. He's just said that you are young enough to go for walks with me.

PENN. Thank you, George.

GEORGE. Not at all, sir. It's a great 'appiness to me to make people feel reconciled to themselves. Can I get you anything, sir?

PENN. I shall want a large tea!

FAIR. No, Mr. Penn, no tea! You will have one glass of cold water now, but nothing else until dinner.

PENN. But I'm hungry, Tony!

GEORGE. I'm glad to 'ear you say that, sir!

FAIR. Cold water must be your tipple in future. Of course, if you want to celebrate your birthday, you can have a glass of hot water.

GEORGE. That'll be an orgy, that will!

PENN. Is it a good dinner to-night, George?

GEORGE. I 'ope so, sir. Mr. Fair 'ad a little talk with the cook this morning about 'er cooking and she's been remarkably silent ever since. It'll either be a good dinner or it'll be 'ellish.

PENN. Well, you go and tell her I've got an appetite. That's something I haven't had for ten years.

GEORGE. Very good, sir. I'll just fetch some more coal for the fire, and then I'll tell 'er. (*To FAIR.*) You know, sir, it does my 'eart good to see a woman lookin' so subdooed as cook is. It's a rare sight, I can assure you, a rare sight, but very enjoyable! [Exit.]

PENN. Do you think a little toast would do me any harm, Tony?

FAIR. Now, look here, if you're going to develop gluttony, I shall give up your case!

PENN. But a little toast! . . .

FAIR. Will ruin your dinner! (*Enter DUNWOODY.*) Ah, here's Dunwoody, with his mind full of noble thoughts for his next novel.

DUNWOODY (*coldly*). I beg your pardon!

FAIR. Still in the throes of creation!

DUNWOODY. I dislike facetiousness, Mr. Fair! Had a nice walk, Mr. Penn?

PENN. Very. (*FAIR goes towards door.*) Are you going, Tony?

FAIR. Only to tidy myself.

PENN. Well, don't be long!

[Exit FAIR.]

DUNWOODY. Singular fellow, that.

PENN. I like him!

DUNWOODY. Oh, I grant you he's likeable—to those who like that kind of person. I confess I find him too exuberant for my taste! His high spirits afflict me.

PENN. They stimulate me. Why, when he comes into the room, I feel all cheered up.

DUNWOODY. Well, perhaps you're right. Personally I prefer people with repose. I hope you are enjoying your stay in England, Mr. Penn?

PENN. I'm enjoying it as much as I enjoy anything. Of course, England has many attractions for an American. We like all your old institutions, although your slowness gets us mad sometimes. I always say that America is the place in which to make money, and England is the place in which to spend it. I wish the Atlantic wasn't quite so wide: it would be nice to spend the week-ends here.

DUNWOODY. Ah, but your country—what a future it has.

PENN. All countries have a future, Mr. Dunwoody. If that was all they had, things would be easy. When people talk to me about America I tell them that the difference between Americans and the English is that we have equality, but no freedom, and that you have freedom but no equality. And I think you are quite right. My most ardent desire, Mr. Dunwoody, is to see the feudal system introduced into the United States.

DUNWOODY. But you once had slaves!

PENN. We had, but they were the wrong colour. All the raw material of the feudal system is there. We've got millions of Jews and Irishmen in America, so we're just about ready for it. (*He yawns.*)

[Enter GEORGE, followed by FRED with coal scuttle.

FRED stokes fire.]

DUNWOODY (to PENN). You're tired. You oughtn't to let Fair take you so far.

PENN. He's doing me good. (*At that moment a cloud of smoke comes out of the chimney and sets him coughing.*) Come upstairs and talk to me. I expect Anna's there!

DUNWOODY. Thank you, but don't you want to have a sleep?

PENN. Sleep! No, I want to talk. Fair's got me so full of pep I could talk from now till Christmas.

DUNWOODY. Well, I'd rather like to join you, if you're quite sure I shan't be in the way!

PENN. Sure! (*They go out chatting together.*)

FRED. The old gentleman seems a bit more spry than what 'e was!

GEORGE. Yes, 'e's spry enough! I don't much fancy that there Dunwoody.

FRED. Do you think 'e's after Miss Anna?

GEORGE. I don't think! I know! An' I 'ope she turns 'im down. Nasty, 'ypercritical chap 'e is.

FRED. Wot?

GEORGE. 'Ypercritical. Sort of what you'd call amphibious. 'E was very unnecessary in 'is remarks about the charges yesterday, very unnecessary.

FRED. Oh, what did 'e say?

GEORGE. Well, 'e compared us to the Savoy 'otel to our disadvantage! Questioned every item in the bill, an' said it was too much.

FRED. Reg'lar Shakespeare, 'e must be!

GEORGE. Shakespeare! 'Ow?

FRED (*as he goes out*). Always wantin' 'is pound of flesh!

[*Exit FRED.*

[*Enter ANNA.*

ANNA. Nobody about, George?

GEORGE. No, miss! Mr. Fair's in 'is room! . . .

ANNA. I'm not interested in Mr. Fair!

GEORGE. No, miss? Your father and Mr. Dunwoody are upstairs.

ANNA. I know. That's why I came down!

GEORGE. Then 'oo *did* you expect to see 'ere, miss?

ANNA. I don't know! I just thought somebody might be here.

GEORGE. I see, miss!

ANNA. George, what do you mean by that remark?

GEORGE. Nothing, miss!

ANNA. Are you suggesting that I came down to look for Mr. Fair?

GEORGE. No, miss, not at all. Not that I'd blame you if you did, but I wasn't 'intin' at it! There's no Arry Air Pansy about me, miss.

ANNA. No what?

GEORGE. Arry Air Pansy! No double entendre, miss!

ANNA. You're like a story-book, George!

GEORGE. Thank you, miss! (*As he goes to the door.*) If I see Mr. Fair, I'll tell 'im you're 'ere!

ANNA. George, I forbid you! . . .

GEORGE. Oh, I'll do it very diplomatically, miss, very diplomatically. (*He opens the door and sees FAIR coming down the stairs.*) 'Ere 'e is, miss!

ANNA. George!

[*But GEORGE slips out and closes the door. ANNA hesitates, and then goes to the window and looks out. The door opens, and FAIR enters.*]

FAIR. Good afternoon!

ANNA. I beg your pardon!

FAIR. I said "Good afternoon."

ANNA. Oh! (*She wanders round the room as if searching for something.*)

FAIR (*picking up "The News of the World" from behind a chair.*) Were you looking for the Sunday paper?

ANTHONY AND ANNA

ANNA. No, thank you!

FAIR. There is a particularly good murder in this one.

ANNA. I'm not interested.

FAIR. You would be if you read about it. It appears that the murderer! . . .

ANNA. Please stop talking to me.

FAIR. I beg your pardon!

[*He sits down, and pretends to read the paper, but he is watching ANNA as she fiddles about the room.*]

FAIR. Are you quite sure you don't want the paper?

ANNA. Perfectly.

FAIR. Well, what do you want?

ANNA. Mr. Fair, will you have the goodness to mind your own business.

FAIR. Would you like me to leave you?

ANNA. I should just love it, but don't put yourself about on my account. So far as I'm concerned, you're not here now.

FAIR. Then I'll stay. (*A pause.*) Do you mind if I talk to myself?

ANNA. No, as long as you don't talk to me! . . .

FAIR. You see, I've already read this paper twice, and even the best murders get a little dull on the third reading. (*No answer.*) I say, I've already read this paper twice! . . .

ANNA. I heard you the first time!

FAIR. H'm! Well, how's your father?

ANNA. Exhausted! That treatment you're giving him leaves him limp for the rest of the day. You made him walk ten miles this morning.

FAIR. Yes, and look how much better he is. Where is he?

ANNA. Upstair trying to tell Mr. Dunwoody the difference between a Democrat and a Republican.

FAIR. And what is the difference?

ANNA. I don't know. Now look here, Mr. Fair, I know I'm not on speaking terms with you, but I want to have an understanding with you.

FAIR. Yes?

ANNA. I believe this physical exercise stunt of yours is a plant to get father so exhausted that he'll stay in his room most of the afternoon, and I'll be forced to talk to you in sheer desperation.

FAIR. Oh, no! No, no!

ANNA. Well, what's the idea?

FAIR. Pure benevolence. I want to see your father's health restored.

ANNA. You don't take any interest in my father!

FAIR. I take a great deal of interest in you.

ANNA. Well, stop taking it.

FAIR. You know, your eyes are very beautiful!

ANNA. Oh, can that! Don't imagine because I'm talking to you now, that I'll talk to you when the rain stops. I wish somebody would come—just to break the monotony.

FAIR. Why not go upstairs and help your father to tell Mr. Dunwoody the difference between a Democrat and a Republican?

ANNA. You've got a strange sense of humour, Mr. Fair.

FAIR. I've always thought that in your country an Englishman is not considered to have a sense of humour at all. Are you going to marry Dunwoody?

ANNA. I'll say you're fierce. I've never known anybody in my life so fresh as you are.

FAIR. Let's take my freshness for granted. Now answer my question.

ANNA. No, I won't. I don't see what it's got to do with you, anyway.

FAIR. It has a great deal to do with me.

ANNA. Oh! What?

FAIR. Well, you see, I want to marry you myself.

ANNA. Jumping Joseph, man, you've gone goofy!

FAIR. Goofy!

ANNA. Yes. Dippy!

FAIR. No, not dippy. No dippier than a man ought to be about you!

ANNA. Do you mean to say you're in love with me?

FAIR. I am.

ANNA. Do you expect me to believe that?

FAIR. I do.

ANNA. You've only known me three days! . . .

FAIR. What has time got to do with it? The moment you came through that window I fell in love with you.

ANNA. Love at first sight!

FAIR. When I saw you coming up the street, looking

so alive and beautiful, I felt my heart warming to you, and when you tumbled through the window into my arms, I loved you. Other people take years to get no further than that.

ANNA (*rather touched*). It sounds terribly romantic, but I guess it wouldn't work.

FAIR. Why?

ANNA. Look here, why don't you tell us what you do? How do you keep yourself?

FAIR. I told you. I live by my wits. When I speak the exact truth, nobody believes me, but if I were to tell you that I am the Governor of the Bank of England, you'd believe me at once.

ANNA. No, I wouldn't. I wouldn't believe anything you told me.

FAIR. You have a very doubting disposition. But you know as well as you're alive that I love you! And you love me!

ANNA. No, I don't. I loathe you!

FAIR. Don't tell lies, Anna. (*Suddenly dropping his voice to an everyday note.*) You've got a smut on your nose!

ANNA. You stand there thinking you're God Almighty, but you aren't. (*Rubbing her nose with her handkerchief.*) Is it off?

FAIR. No. You're rubbing the wrong place. A little lower. Allow me. (*He takes her handkerchief from her.*) Just damp it, will you! (*She wets it with her tongue.*) I know very well that I'm not God Almighty! (*Rubs the smut off.*) There! It's off! (*Returns her handkerchief.*) But that's not my fault.

ANNA. Thank you!

FAIR. Why did you come down here when you might have stayed upstairs?

ANNA. I was just walking around.

FAIR. You came down here to be near me.

ANNA. Your conceit is sickening.

FAIR. You love me, Anna, don't you?

ANNA. No.

FAIR. Don't lie, Anna.

ANNA. I wish father would come down.

FAIR. Why don't you go up to him? (*He goes to the door and opens it.*) Look, the way's clear. Just up those stairs! . . .

ANNA. I'll stay here if I like. I'm not going to let you order me about.

FAIR (*shutting the door*). You don't want to go. You love me, Anna. Come here!

ANNA. No.

FAIR. Come here!

ANNA. No, I tell you!

FAIR. All right! I'll come to you! . . .

ANNA. Stay where you are! Mr. Fair! . . .

FAIR. Tony to you!

ANNA. Mr. Fair, there's something about you which makes me feel I want to hit you.

FAIR. Well, hit me! (*She lifts her hand as if she were about to hit him, pauses, and then puts her arms round his neck and kisses him.*)

ANNA (*sobbing*). Oh, I loathe you, I loathe you, I loathe you!

FAIR. I know, darling, I know.

ANNA. Of course, I can't marry you!

FAIR. Why?

ANNA. I don't know anything about you. I don't know who you are, or what you do, or anything.

FAIR. Is it necessary to know anything about a man before you marry him?

ANNA. But you can't marry somebody you don't know!

FAIR. Everybody does. Do you think you know Dunwoody better than you know me?

ANNA. Well, I've been acquainted with him longer.

FAIR. Does that make you feel you want to marry him?

ANNA. It doesn't make me feel I don't want to marry him.

FAIR. But you're not going to!

ANNA. Perhaps. I'd rather like to be a literary man's wife.

FAIR. Anna, I forbid you to marry that man. He's so deficient in ordinary emotions, that he has to invent some.

That's why he's a novelist. That's why all novelists are novelists. They're poor devils who want to lead a hell of a life, but haven't got the courage to do it, and so they invent characters who do all the heroic things the novelists would like to do, but can't. And they call that Art.

ANNA. I love listening to you, you have such interesting ideas.

FAIR. If you marry Dunwoody, he'll use you as "copy" for his next book.

ANNA. I'd like to be put in a book.

FAIR. Ask the people who've been put in books what they think of it. No, Anna, you're going to marry me! . . .

ANNA. If I only knew how you get your money! . . .

FAIR. That's what I was going to tell you on Wednesday only you interrupted me! . . .

[*The door opens, and MR. PENN, followed by DUNWOODY, enters.*]

ANNA. You're just in time, father. Mr. Fair's going to tell me how he earns his living.

PENN. Honey, honey, I don't think you ought to bother Tony the way you do. (*To ANTHONY.*) Mr. Dunwoody and me have just been having a little intellectual discussion. He takes a great interest in the constitution and government of the United States, internal and external!

DUNWOODY (*a little oracularly*). Yes. It seems to me that the United States must increasingly play a predominant part in the world's affairs! . . .

FAIR. Yes, yes!

DUNWOODY. And therefore it is desirable that we here in Europe, the Old World, should know something about the United States.

ANNA. Why?

DUNWOODY. Well, isn't it obvious? To know all is to forgive all.

PENN. I don't quite see the relevance of that remark to America.

DUNWOODY. I've expressed myself clumsily. To know all, is to understand all! . . .

ANNA. Oh, father, I forgot to tell you, Mr. Fair wants to marry me.

PENN. Honey, you're interrupting a serious intellectual discussion with flippant remarks.

ANNA. But it's true, father.

PENN. Tony, did you propose marriage to my daughter?

FAIR. I did and she refused me.

PENN. Well, there doesn't seem to be anything more to be said about it.

FAIR. But I won't take "No" for an answer. I suggest that we should be married at the end of October! . . .

PENN. My God, man, stop talking for a minute. Where are we? A moment ago we were discussing the constitution and government of America, and now we're getting married at the end of October. Go slow, somebody, till I get this proposition worked out.

DUNWOODY. Miss Penn!

ANNA. Mr. Dunwoody!

DUNWOODY. Are you going to marry this gentleman?

ANNA. That's what he says!

DUNWOODY (*with noble resignation*). I'm sorry.

ANNA. Now, Mr. Fair, you can go on with the story of your life.

PENN. But wait, woman, wait! I want this thing squared up.

ANNA. You'll have to hear his story first. A lot depends on that.

FAIR. Sit down, won't you?

DUNWOODY. If you'll excuse me, I'll! . . . (*Rises to leave the room*.)

ANNA. No, you got to hear it, too. Sit down! (*He resumes his seat*.)

FAIR. You remember where we broke off on Wednesday. I had got to the point of telling you that I had a strong dislike of work.

ANNA. That was when the row began! . . .

FAIR (*patting her hands*). Yes, and there'll be another one if you don't keep quiet. At first, things went very nicely. I lived like a lord on my legacy.

ANNA. How does a lord live?

FAIR. Well, mostly like a retired civil servant with a small pension, but the idea is that he lives like a Wet

American in Paris. My money did not last long, and I discovered that I was up against it.

ANNA. Up against what?

FAIR. Everything—but chiefly the problem of getting money.

PENN. Earning a living, you mean?

FAIR. No, I mean getting money.

ANNA. And so you decided to turn crook!

FAIR. No. I made another discovery.

ANNA. Say! Your name ought to be Christopher Columbus!

FAIR. If it were, I should be very careful what I discovered.

ANNA. I'm punctured! Go on, tell us how you took to a life of crime.

FAIR. I discovered that people liked me.

ANNA. That must have surprised you.

FAIR. No, it didn't. I have always been liked. You like me and your father likes me! Dunwoody, of course, doesn't, but that's because he knows that you like me better than you like him.

DUNWOODY (*jumping to his feet*). Mr. Fair, I must protest against this studied insolence.

ANNA. Oh, sit down!

DUNWOODY. I feel ashamed that a countryman of mine should behave in this outrageous manner before people from another country. Mr. Penn, Miss Penn, I apologize to you for Mr. Fair's conduct.

PENN. All right, Dunwoody, we don't mind. As a matter of fact, it amuses me, and I guess Anna don't dislike it.

DUNWOODY. But *I* do.

ANNA. Put him in your next novel—that'll annoy him. Come and sit down beside me.

DUNWOODY (*sitting down beside her*). Absolutely outrageous! . . .

PENN. Go on, Tony!

FAIR. As I was saying, when Dunwoody interrupted, I was not surprised to find that people liked me—what did surprise me was my failure to realize the commercial possibilities of my popularity.

PENN. I've got you. You sold things to your friends on commission.

FAIR. Oh, no! No. I found myself being invited to a great many parties. I was constantly asked away for the week-end.

PENN. That must have helped to reduce your overheads.

FAIR. It didn't. It increased them. What with tips to the servants, and railway fares, and whatnot, a week-end in the country cost me far more than if I stayed at home and paid for my own food. I said to myself: "This won't do! Here am I going about the country, brightening people's lives, and instead of being paid for it, I am actually out of pocket!" That isn't good business, Mr. Penn.

PENN. Not when you put it like that.

FAIR. Then came my difficulty. How was I to make an income out of my personal charm?

ANNA. You seem very certain about your charm.

FAIR. I am. Your father's pretty certain about his business ability. Well, I'm pretty certain about mine. I once went into the company of some people in a country-house who were so bored with each other, that they spent most of their time looking up railway guides. Ten minutes after my arrival, they were trying to extend their visit. How many people in the world could make that happen? Anybody who has enough low cunning and is sufficiently callous, can make a fortune, but very few people can make charm? I'm one of them. I am a public benefactor, but I am regarded as a sort of criminal because I refuse to work.

DUNWOODY. This is an interesting point of view. I'm glad, Miss Penn, you persuaded me to stay. Perhaps I may be allowed to say something on the subject while it is still fresh in my mind. The creative artist, Mr. Fair—I am a creative artist—does what you describe yourself as doing, and his reward is partly pleased vanity—partly, well, money from the sale of his work. But chiefly it is intense satisfaction in his sense of power.

PENN (*taking the floor*). Ah, yes, power! That's what I have. The power to control other people.

DUNWOODY. Yes, but let me finish.

PENN. Pardon me! (*He resumes his seat.*)

DUNWOODY. You, Mr. Fair, are not a creative artist. You can, I hope, not offensively be described as an uncreative artist. The public cannot reward you because you give it nothing tangible—such as a book, a picture, a play, a piece of music, or sculpture! . . .

FAIR. I give it something more tangible than any of these things. I give it pleasant company, agreeable conversation, a sense of happy living and fellowship. I enliven the dull. I manufacture felicity. Even from the tomb, I shall be dispensing charm through the biographies and reminiscences of those who knew me when I was alive. My grave will still be fragrant with pleasant memories when the graves of most people are forgotten. Do you imagine, Mr. Penn, that you, when you are dead, will be operating as benignly from your grave as I shall be from mine?

PENN. I don't operate benignly now.

FAIR. Exactly. My contention, Mr. Penn, is that I am rendering a greater service to humanity than you are, and yet you are held up to the young as an example, while I am treated as a waster.

ANNA. You're running away from the point. What I want to know is how you get your money. People don't walk up to you and say: "Please I'll have ten pounds worth of your charming conversation!" . . .

FAIR. That's exactly what they do do. I have a scale of fees for attending parties. I get three guineas for a luncheon, and five for a dinner, because that lasts longer and I'm expected to be agreeable after the coffee as well as before. My charge for a short week-end is ten guineas, and for a long one, fifteen. My host has to provide me with a first-class return railway ticket and pay all the servants' tips. By these means I contrive to keep myself off the rates, but I resent having to use them.

DUNWOODY. I'm glad you have the grace to be ashamed of your—profession.

FAIR. But I'm not ashamed of it. I resent having to make a profession out of what should be a pastime. I resent also the suggestion that what I do is not supremely

important. I insist that my power to make the time pass agreeably and pleasantly is a great and beneficent thing in itself, and that its value should be recognized by the community in the form of a large and regular income.

ANNA. How is it you're not in employment now?

FAIR. Trade is very slack at present. There's been a slump in charm. At the moment I am unemployed. I suppose, Mr. Penn, you do not require the services of a companionable guide to the beauty-spots of England?

PENN. No, I think not. You're a clever young man, Tony, and you've done me a lot of good, both intellectually and physically, but you talk too well, and I do not trust people who talk as well as you do. I have no doubt I am old-fashioned, but I have a conviction that work is a noble institution, and that a real, honest-to-goodness he-man wants to work. What you need is a job.

FAIR. What I need is an income.

ANNA. Would you take a job if father gave it to you?

FAIR. No, I must be faithful to my principles.

ANNA. It wouldn't be so bad if you said you believed in work, even if you didn't do any! Couldn't you be a secret worker?

FAIR. I am willing to take on the job of being your husband! . . .

PENN. No, Tony. I can't bring myself to accept as a son-in-law a man who denies the dignity of labour. I do not know whether Anna has committed herself to this proposition! . . .

ANNA. I think I'd like to marry him, father, but I'm not sure.

PENN. Well, you can't do it, honey.

DUNWOODY. All this, of course, is as unlike fiction as it can be. I feel myself becoming positively unconventional. I have deceived you! . . .

PENN. My God, you aren't a crook, too?

DUNWOODY. No, no; my deception is an honourable one. When I arrived, I pretended that I did not know you were here. That was a lie. I came here because you were here, and I came for a purpose. Miss Penn, you must have realized how deeply attached I am to you. I did not intend to say anything of this until later, but Mr.

Fair's singular behaviour forces me to say now what I have long wanted to say. Anna, will you marry me?

PENN. Gosh! you're all at it!

ANNA. Well, I don't know. What do you think, Mr. Fair?

FAIR. I think not. No, Dunwoody, we thank you for your kind offer, but we regret that we cannot accept it. Miss Penn is about to make up her mind to marry me.

DUNWOODY. How can she hope for happiness if she marries you?

FAIR. How can she hope for happiness with any man? She'll have to take a chance with you or with me or with anybody. What makes you all imagine that a woman is going to be happier with a man who works and has an income and can support her, than she is with a man who doesn't work and has no income and can't support her?

ANNA. Do you think you can make me happy?

FAIR. I don't know. That's what we've got to find out, but we can't find it out unless we live together.

PENN. And supposing you can't?

FAIR. That'll be bad luck. I can't give any guarantees. Dunwoody can't. You couldn't.

PENN. I didn't. My wife left me when Anna was seven years old.

FAIR. So the man who works hard! . . . Oh, I beg your pardon!

PENN. Don't apologize. You can't hurt my feelings. I haven't got my wife, but I've got Anna, and she's a lot of compensation. I am willing to concede to you, Tony, that you've got the best of the argument, but I don't know that argument matters much. A man must be able to hold his own with a woman, and he can only do that if he fights for her. The man who doesn't work isn't fighting.

FAIR. You worked.

PENN. I did, and my wife ran away from me. That's one up to you. But all the same, Tony, my instinct is against you. I can't let you marry Anna, unless you take a job and hold it.

FAIR. No, I'm damned if I will. It's against my principles to work. I believe in a leisure class—a body of cultured and agreeable people who offer a standard of

civility and charm to the rest of the community in return for their keep. How am I to maintain that standard if I go about working?

DUNWOODY. You aren't straight!

FAIR. Straight? Have you never noticed that nothing in Nature is ever quite straight? Every tree, every branch on a tree, every leaf on a branch, has a twist.

PENN. What do you think would become of the world if everybody thought the way you think?

FAIR. What do you think would happen if everybody in London wanted to catch the one o'clock train from Paddington to Bristol next Tuesday?

PENN. Everybody wouldn't want to catch it.

FAIR. Exactly. Everybody doesn't think the way I do. There are actually people—you, for example—who like work. It seems to me a perverted taste, but there it is. The majority of people don't like it, but are reconciled to it. There remain, Mr. Penn, the minority who loathe work. Some of them are tramps—unfortunate members of the aristocracy. Others are like myself—resolved to live on the labour or money of the rest of the community. It is we who set the standards of civilized society. Without us, there would be no taste, no style, no grace or generosity, no art, no literature, no music, no civilization, nothing but pointless and incessant activity. When you rich men and your little brothers, the Communists, have achieved your heart's desire, a ruled and regulated world in which a man will not be able to move from one village to another without a permit from the authorities, there will be no art, no grace of life, no fine manners, because there will not be any aristocracy, no leisure class! . . .

DUNWOODY. No loafers!

FAIR. As you say, Mr. Dunwoody, no loafers.

PENN. What's going to happen to *you* when that time comes?

FAIR. I shall probably die of starvation.

PENN. And you won't take a job?

FAIR. I'm sorry!

PENN. Then that ends it.

FAIR. I'm afraid so.

DUNWOODY. But, my dear fellow, a man'll do anything for the woman he loves.

FAIR. You deceive yourself, Dunwoody. He won't. You wouldn't. Women would hate us if we did.

[The noise of a motor-car drawing up outside the inn is heard.]

PENN. Hullo! somebody coming! (*He goes to the window and looks out.*)

ANNA (*to FAIR*). I'll marry you. I'm sorry, Mr. Dunwoody, but I think I'll marry him.

DUNWOODY. I cannot say I am gratified by your decision, Anna, but, of course, I hope you will be happy. I hope so. (*He says it in the tone of one who anticipates the worst.*)

ANNA. Thank you, Mr. Dunwoody. Who is it, father?

PENN. A man and a woman. He's just going round to the garage. She's coming in now. Have you made up your mind yet, honey?

ANNA. Yes, father, I'm going to have Mr. Fair.

PENN. Well, he knows my terms.

[The sound of GEORGE's voice is heard outside the door, and the sound of LADY CYNTHIA SPEEDWELL'S in reply.]

DUNWOODY. If you will excuse me, I will leave you!

ANNA. Now, don't go and be bad about it, Mr. Dunwoody. I can't marry you both.

DUNWOODY. No, no—I realize that.

[He goes to the door, which is opened by GEORGE just as he reaches it.]

GEORGE. Oh, I beg your pardon, sir.

DUNWOODY. All right, George. My fault. *[Exit.]*

GEORGE (*at the door*). This way, ma'am, if you please.

[LADY CYNTHIA SPEEDWELL enters. She is about thirty-four years of age. Her face is pretty enough, but it has a calculating look which slightly detracts from her prettiness. She is not so expensively dressed as ANNA, but she has an air of being more so.]

GEORGE. I'll tell your 'usband you're 'ere.

CYNTHIA. But he's not my husband. I'm not married.

GEORGE. Oh! Well, any'ow, I'll tell 'im you're 'ere.

[Exit.]

ANNA. Why, if it isn't Cynthia Speedwell!

CYNTHIA. Anna! My dear! (*They embrace.*) What ages since we met! (*Seeing TONY.*) And Tony Fair!

FAIR. Hullo, Cynthia!

ANNA. Do you mean to say you know him?

CYNTHIA. Ever since I was a child.

ANNA. I want to have you meet my father. Father, this is Lady Cynthia Speedwell.

PENN. I'm very glad to meet you, Lady Cynthia.

CYNTHIA. Why haven't we met before?

PENN. That's what's puzzling me.

CYNTHIA. Tony, it really is ages since I last saw you. Where have you been all this time?

FAIR. Oh, about, you know—just about.

ANNA. He and I are engaged to be married!

CYNTHIA. Oh, I do congratulate you. He's very nice to be engaged to.

ANNA. Why, have you been engaged to him?

CYNTHIA. No. Oh, no. But I once thought I'd like to marry him. There were three reasons why I couldn't. The first was that he didn't love me. The second was that I didn't love him. And the third was that neither of us had any money.

FAIR. That was the only reason that mattered.

PENN. What makes you want to marry a man you don't love when he doesn't love you?

CYNTHIA. I thought it would be so nice to start married life without prejudice. But I didn't know you knew Tony!

ANNA. We didn't three days ago. We don't really know him now. Who is he anyway?

CYNTHIA. Well, he's a sort of cousin of mine. Aren't you, Tony?

FAIR. I believe so. What Anna wants to know is, am I a crook?

CYNTHIA. You may be for all I know. You play cards rather well!

ANNA. Do you play cards for money?

FAIR. Oh, yes.

PENN. You didn't say anything about that when you were describing yourself to us just now.

FAIR. No; I thought you'd think the worst, so I kept that to myself.

CYNTHIA. Oh, have I blundered? Really, Anna, he's the most honest person I know. Of course, I don't know many honest people, but still I've never caught him doing anything shady. I wish James would come.

ANNA. James!

CYNTHIA. I ought to have told you. I've been getting engaged, too. To James Jago. You've probably heard of him. He's the Australian millionaire. I'm not sure how he made his money, but I think he sold sheep for a great deal of money and bought them back for nothing.

FAIR (*uneasily*). Did you say his name was Jago?

CYNTHIA. Yes. Do you know him?

FAIR. I once met a man of that name. Are you staying long, Cynthia?

CYNTHIA. Only for tea!

FAIR. I'll say "good-bye" now in case I don't see you again!

CYNTHIA. Aren't you going to have tea, too?

FAIR. No. I've got some things I want to do upstairs.

CYNTHIA. But I want you to meet James!

FAIR. Some other time.

CYNTHIA. He's really a pet, and I daresay I shall do something with him!

FAIR. Well, good-bye!

CYNTHIA. Good-bye. (*Exit FAIR.*) Poor James, he's been manœuvring all afternoon to get me alone—we're staying at Dorothy Gunston's—so that he could propose to me, and when I saw what he was up to, I agreed to come here to tea with him in his little runabout—the Rolls-Royce, you know!—and we managed to understand each other.

[Enter JAMES JAGO, aged about forty-five—not a bad little ruffian.]

CYNTHIA. Ah, here is James. James, come and smile for the company. (*She introduces him.*) My friend, Miss Anna Penn.

JAGO. Pleased to meet you, I'm sure, Miss Penn.

ANNA. Congratulations, Mr. Jago!

JAGO. Thanks. I've done well for myself, haven't I?

CYNTHIA. Mr. Penn—Anna's father!

PENN. I'm delighted to meet you, Mr. Jago, especially in such happy circumstances.

JAGO. Thanks!

PENN. My daughter's just been getting engaged, too.

JAGO. Oh, I congratulate the man, whoever he is!

CYNTHIA. Where is Tony?

ANNA. He went upstairs.

CYNTHIA. He might have stayed to see James.

JAGO. You know, Mr. Penn, this is a great day for me.

PENN. I'm sure it is.

JAGO. When the people I used to know before the War see in the newspapers that I'm engaged to be married to Lady Cynthia Speedwell, they won't half say: "James Jago's got on in the world!"

CYNTHIA. Isn't he a darling? You know, you're almost incredible, James!

JAGO. I mean every word I say. Of course, I know she's only marrying me for my money. That's natural. Still, it's something to be married for your money by an earl's daughter.

CYNTHIA. It's lucky for you, James, you've got thirty thousand a year. I should have refused you if you'd had less.

JAGO. That's her free-and-easy, aristocratic way, Mr. Penn! (*Affectionately to CYNTHIA.*) You shall have the best that money can buy. I can promise you that. To-morrow morning, by the first train, I go up to Bond Street to buy the ring.

CYNTHIA. You'd better let me buy it, James!

JAGO. Just as you like, my dear! I know my taste's a bit crude, and I don't want to get anything that'll make you look like a pawnbroker's intended. I've got a lot to learn, but I'm willing to learn it. You know, Mr. Penn, I believe in the old aristocracy. They've got style, and that's what I need. Lady Cynthia's got style! . . .

CYNTHIA. You needn't call me *Lady* Cynthia, James!

JAGO. But I like to, my dear. It makes me realize what I've reached! Style, Mr. Penn, that's what we need. She walks about the earth as if she were perfectly sure of herself. I'd like to do that! *But, you know, the old*

nobility needs reviving. New blood! Strong, healthy, common blood!

CYNTHIA. Money, darling, not blood!

JAGO. You're wrong, dear, if you'll forgive me for suggesting it to you. Blood and money, that's what the old nobility needs, and I'm in a position to give it to them. Money and blood and style—what can beat 'em? And we've got 'em all three between us, haven't we, my dear?

CYNTHIA. You're absolutely rich, darling! I believe I shall get quite fond of you.

JAGO. I've got money, but no manners. You've got manners, but no money. The proper thing to do is to amalgamate. Tone and tin! (*He is highly amused by his little joke.*)

[GEORGE, followed by FRED, enters with tea-trays.]

ANNA. Have you seen Mr. Fair, George?

GEORGE. Yes, miss; he's just going out for a walk.

ANNA. Walk!

GEORGE. Yes, miss. 'E's still in the 'all, if you want to speak to 'im.

ANNA. Father, tell him I want him.

PENN. All right, honey. (*He goes out, passing DUNWOODY, who enters, on the way.*)

DUNWOODY (*to ANNA*). Oh, George says he has served my tea with yours. I hope you don't mind! . . .

ANNA. No, Mr. Dunwoody. Come right in. I want to have you meet Lady Cynthia Speedwell and Mr. Jago.

DUNWOODY. How do you do.

CYNTHIA. } How do you do!

JAGO. } Oh, ah, pleased to meet you! . . .

PENN (*returning*). Here he is, honey. [ANTHONY enters.

ANNA (*to JAGO*). Do you know Mr. Fair?

JAGO. Which one?

ANNA. This one.

FAIR. Hullo, Jago!

JAGO. So you're 'ere, are you?

CYNTHIA. You know each other!

JAGO. Know him! I should think I do know him! Why, I kicked him out of my house six weeks ago. (*This remark brings most of them to their feet.*)

FAIR. He's speaking figuratively, of course. He couldn't kick me out—physically?

ANNA. Well, whatever way you left, what was it for?

JAGO. Cheating at cards—that's what it was for.

PENN. A card-sharper! H'm!

CYNTHIA. But I constantly cheat at cards! . . .

PENN. You're a woman. You're expected to cheat at cards. Any nice woman would. But he's a man.

JAGO. I invited him to my house to give me a few tips on how to behave myself. I paid him a good fee, too. Didn't I?

FAIR. Yes, Jago; you certainly paid me well.

JAGO. I agreed to all his conditions. He said I must fill the house with rich and enthusiastic card-players. And I did. Didn't I?

FAIR. Yes—they were rich and enthusiastic and most unwilling to lose their money.

JAGO. So would anyone be.

ANNA. And did you make 'em lose?

FAIR. I did.

JAGO. I should think so. He stung 'em for the best part of fifty quid apiece, playing poker. My guests didn't like it, and they said so. One of them accused him of cheating, and he didn't deny it. Did you?

FAIR. No.

JAGO. After that, of course, he had to go.

FAIR. And I went. But there was one trifling mistake, Mr. Jago, made by you and your friends. I didn't cheat.

JAGO. Well, why didn't you deny it, then?

FAIR. It is not my habit to deny things. If I permit myself to associate with people who think I am capable of cheating at cards, then it serves me right if I am accused of cheating. I should be more careful what company I keep.

PENN. Yes, but wait a minute. Why did you try to sneak out of the hotel just now? Looks as if you were trying to dodge our friend here.

FAIR. That is exactly what I was trying to do. Neither you nor Anna know me well enough to be sure that I am not a card-sharper. A charge of cheating, on top of an acknowledgment of idleness, could hardly make you feel

better disposed towards me. So I decided to go for a walk until Jago had departed. I couldn't cheat. I should be found out if I tried! . . .

ANNA. Have you ever tried?

FAIR. Yes, once; and was immediately detected.

PENN. Say, you're a queer chap. Do you mean to say you deliberately cheated at cards?

FAIR. Yes. I wanted to see whether I could do it or not. I soon discovered that I couldn't.

PENN. But, Mr. Fair, cheating at cards! . . .

FAIR. Have you never cheated at cards?

PENN. Never. Never in my life! . . .

ANNA. Father, you don't play cards. But you play chequers, and I've seen you cheat time after time.

PENN. Not for money. He cheated at cards when he was playing for money.

FAIR. I think I should have won about sevenpence! . . .

PENN. Oh, then it wasn't serious!

FAIR. Yes, it was serious. I tried my best to cheat . . . but I was too clumsy and nervous to succeed, and I realized that if I wanted to make money at cards I must learn to play them better than anybody else. I'm a very accomplished player.

PENN. Well, that settles this proposal of marriage anyway. Mr. Fair, you cannot marry my daughter.

ANNA. I don't see that, father.

PENN. But I do, honey. I am not endowing a man who lives by gambling. I hate to cross you, but this time my word carries.

DUNWOODY. I think it is quite clear, Miss Penn, your father's fortune weighs considerably with Mr. Fair.

FAIR. Speaking as one cat to another, Dunwoody, that's not done in the best fiction!

PENN. Well, would you marry my daughter if she were a poor girl?

FAIR. No, Mr. Penn, I would not.

JAGO. } I say, that's cool!

DUNWOODY. } Well, the fellow's honest anyhow!

CYNTHIA. } My dear Tony!

ANNA. Do you mean to say you only want me for my money?

FAIR. No, I didn't say that. I said I wouldn't marry you if you were poor.

CYNTHIA. But what does it matter? I'm marrying James for his money, aren't I, James?

JAGO. Yes, but anybody might be glad to marry Miss Penn for herself alone.

ANNA (*to Anthony*). You wouldn't marry me for myself alone?

FAIR. No. My dear, I couldn't marry you if you were penniless. I live by my wits. One month I am fairly well off. The next month I am not. How could I possibly keep you, when I can barely keep myself?

DUNWOODY. Very ingenious, Mr. Fair, but not very convincing.

FAIR. My dear Dunwoody, I'm not trying to convince you. Your opinion of me, good or bad, leaves me stone cold. If I cannot convince Anna that I love her, and yet would not marry her if she were not a rich woman, then it does not matter to me who's convinced and who's not.

PENN. Well, we're not convinced, Mr. Fair.

ANNA. Speak for yourself, father. I am.

FAIR. Thank you, Anna.

PENN. One minute, honey. I've still got the ace of trumps. If you marry him, he'll have to keep you on what he makes at cards. He won't do it on my money.

FAIR. You mean that you will disinherit her?

PENN. That's exactly what I do mean. No, honey, I'm perfectly serious about this. You're a free woman, and you can marry whom you like, but I won't let you have a nickel if you marry Tony. That's all there's to it.

ANNA. Well, I'll marry him without your money, then.

FAIR. No, darling, you won't. I'm sorry, but you won't.

ANNA. Then you *are* after my money?

FAIR. Yes, every half-penny of it.

ANNA. You low-down cad!

PENN. Honey!

ANNA. You common card-sharper! You tried to put it over me you loved me from the start! . . .

DUNWOODY. I think George had told him your father is a millionaire!

ANNA (*rounding on him*). You hush up, you! I can look after my own affairs without you butting in. (*To FAIR.*) I might have fallen for you, but you weren't good enough to last. You've insulted me ever since you got here! . . .

FAIR (*making a move towards her*). No, Anna! . . .

ANNA. Don't dare talking to me that way! . . . (*She hits him in the face, and then is overcome by her act.*) Oh, I . . . I! . . .

[ANTHONY bows to her and stands back without speaking.

ANNA looks about her a little distractedly and then, crying hard, runs out of the room. There is a pause for a moment, after she has gone. Then ANTHONY goes towards the door. As he does so, MR. PENN calls after him.]

PENN. Say!

DUNWOODY. I suppose you realize what a howling cad you are!

FAIR (*ignoring him*). Yes, Mr. Penn?

DUNWOODY. One moment. It is my duty, as your countryman, to deal with you.

FAIR (*very fiercely*). Look here, Dunwoody, if you interrupt me again, I shall disarrange your face! . . .

JAGO. Come, come, no quarrelling.

CYNTHIA (*hurriedly pulling him away*). James, I forbid you to act as a peacemaker. I've no wish to lose you before we're married.

FAIR (*turning from DUNWOODY, who has now subsided*). You were speaking to me, Mr. Penn?

PENN. I guess my daughter's in love with you.

FAIR. Yes, I think so, too.

PENN. I'll settle a fortune on you both if you'll take a job.

FAIR. I, too, have my principles, Mr. Penn. I will not work!

PENN. Not even for Anna?

FAIR. You take an unfair advantage of me, Mr. Penn. Good afternoon!

PENN. Good afternoon! (*Exit FAIR.*) Gee! that boy can talk some!

THE THIRD ACT

The scene is the same as that of the Second Act. The time is three hours later. JAGO, DUNWOODY, and LADY CYNTHIA are present. JAGO rings the bell, and then holds forth to the others. Evidently he has been holding forth for some time.

JAGO. Well, all I can say is that I don't approve of Fair's attitude. [FRED enters.

FRED. Did you ring, sir?

JAGO. Yes, Fred, I did. You'll have a glass of sherry, Cynthia?

CYNTHIA. No, thanks. I'm old-fashioned. I'll just have a cocktail. One of your worst, Fred.

FRED. Yes, my lady!

JAGO. Sherry for you, Dunwoody?

DUNWOODY. Yes, please. Dark, Fred.

FRED. Very good, sir.

JAGO. The same for me. (*Exit FRED.*) What was I saying?

CYNTHIA. Well, darling, I forgot to take a verbatim report. In the course of the afternoon, you've mentioned the state of trade, the League of Nations, the Royal Family, the Government with contempt! . . .

JAGO. Have I been talking too much?

DUNWOODY. You are the most articulate strong, silent, business man I've ever heard, Jago. But go on. It's a change for me to listen.

JAGO. I don't want to monopolize the conversation! . . .

DUNWOODY. Go on, go on!

JAGO (*sitting down, a little sulky now*).^{*} No, you have a turn.

CYNTHIA. Finish your sentence, James. I remember now what you were saying. Something about your disapproval of Tony's attitude.

JAGO (*on his legs at once*). Oh, ah, yes! Well, I don't approve of it. (*Re-enter FRED with a tray of drinks which he distributes. When he has distributed them, he goes out.*) I may be old-fashioned! . . .

DUNWOODY. In these matters, we all are.

JAGO. Well, then, I am old-fashioned, *and* proud of it! And what I think, and what I say is that a man ought to treat a woman different from the way Tony's treated Miss Penn. Of course, there's a lot of talk nowadays about the equality of the sexes and all that, but nobody believes it—not women anyway. Mind you, there are women here and there that are equal to men, even superior to them, if you follow me, Dunwoody.

DUNWOODY. Oh, I follow you!

JAGO. Cynthia here is my superior . . . in some respects!

CYNTHIA. James, darling!

JAGO. Well, Cynthia, you are . . . in some respects . . . but on the whole, taking them by and large, broad and long, men are superior to women. You can't get away from it! You *can't get away* from it! You just have to accept the fact.

CYNTHIA. Who, darling? You or me?

JAGO. Well, everybody. That's a fact, isn't it, Dunwoody? Men have to behave differently to women from the way they behave to men.

DUNWOODY. Quite, quite! That, in fact, is the theme of my new novel! . . .

JAGO. Yes, but wait a minute. I haven't finished yet.

DUNWOODY. I beg your pardon.

CYNTHIA. But, darling James, you really must let somebody else say something. This isn't a conversation: it's a monologue.

JAGO. I know, my dear, but Dunwoody is a literary gent. (*A look of anguish passes over DUNWOODY's face at the words "literary gent."*) And I'm only a plain, blunt business man. Deeds, not words is my motto. He can talk: I can only do things. So you see, dear, if I don't get my bit in at once, I won't be able to get it in at all. These literary chaps, you know, can talk people like me down in no time.

DUNWOODY. Talk *you* down, Jago?

JAGO. If only business men could express themselves as fluently as authors, what a different state of things there would be. All my life I've regretted the fact that I'm not much of a talker. I'm a doer. Ask me to talk, and where am I?

CYNTHIA. I don't know, darling.

JAGO. Nowhere. Dumb, that's what I am. Can't get a word out. But ask me to do something, and then see?

DUNWOODY. Well, then, do something.

JAGO. What do you mean—*do* something?

DUNWOODY. Settle this business.

JAGO. That's what I'm trying to do. What I say is this, the man has to cherish the woman—cherish her. It's in the Prayer Book, and it's no good blaming me for it.

CYNTHIA. We're not, darling.

JAGO. When I was a lad, I used to go about with girls same as other chaps. I like girls. I mean to say, I'm partial to them! . . .

CYNTHIA. Not too partial, I hope.

JAGO. In reason, of course. There's reason in everything, girls and everything else. But I never got entangled with any of the girls I knew. Why?

DUNWOODY. I haven't the faintest idea.

JAGO. Well, I'll tell you. Because I didn't feel I could cherish any of 'em long enough. A man can only cherish a woman when she brings something into his life that he hasn't got, something that'll make him fight like hell for her? See? Something gay and refined and nice and—well, you know, alluring! I made up my mind that I wouldn't marry a woman who wasn't a bit above me, so that I should have something to climb to. So I went on aspiring until I met Cynthia. I don't think there's anything higher.

CYNTHIA. That's very charming of you, James. I hope I shall be a credit to you.

JAGO. Credit to me! It'll take me all my time to be a credit to you. Now, here's my point. I couldn't have climbed to this, if I'd married a woman I couldn't cherish and do things for. See? I want my wife to look pretty and smart and better-dressed than all the other women and able to hold her own with the best. All she has to do is get on with the spending and be what I want her to be.

CYNTHIA. A beautiful dream, James, but supposing she only wants to be herself.

JAGO. Well, if it happens to be what I want, that'll be all right.

CYNTHIA. But if it isn't?

JAGO. Then she'll have to go and be herself by herself. The man's the chap who provides, and if he isn't, he's no man. He's a what-you-may-call 'em!

DUNWOODY. You don't agree with Jago, Lady Cynthia?

CYNTHIA. Up to a point, yes, but not entirely. As a woman I demand from my husband ambition, courage, ferocity! . . .

JAGO. I've got that all right. You watch anybody trying to take things from me.

CYNTHIA. Strength and devotion.

JAGO. That describes me exactly.

CYNTHIA. But I want also the graces of life, James. You haven't any.

JAGO. You'll supply them, Cynthia.

CYNTHIA. How do I know that you'll be able to appreciate them? You haven't trained yourself in the civilities, and you're still the little errand boy so far as any culture's concerned. That is where all you great captains of industry fall down. You have the means to lead a civilized life, but you haven't the minds. You mustn't imagine that an untrained person can understand or appreciate a great book, a great picture, a great piece of music. He can't do it, my dear, because he's been so busy climbing and fighting, that he hasn't had time to acquire any graces. Now, Tony deliberately devotes himself to the cultivation and encouragement of charm. He says that anyone who is sufficiently unscrupulous can make money, but that charm can only be made by those who have cultivated a gracious spirit. That takes time, James, and much thought and training. (*Enter MR. PENN.*) Where's Anna, Mr. Penn?

PENN. In her room. She won't speak to me. You know, I feel real bad about this business. I'm physically fitter than I've been in years. I owe that to Tony. In addition, I like him. His company kind of stimulates me, and I get a kick out of his conversation. Why in hell! . . . I beg your pardon, Lady Cynthia!

CYNTHIA. My dear Mr. Penn, I'm a playgoer, and I'm accustomed to much worse than that.

PENN. Well, why can't Tony act sensible? Everybody's got to act sensible sometimes.

CYNTHIA. But he doesn't believe in work.

JAGO. Now, look here, I'm a plain, blunt business man and I don't profess to know anything about Art and Literature, although I respect them! . . .

PENN. So do I, so do I.

JAGO. What I want to know is this. If everybody's to have all this leisure Tony talks about, what's everybody going to do with himself? Get on his wife's nerves?

PENN. Mr. Jago, you have expressed my soul.

CYNTHIA. I think it is very desirable in a world where everybody is being busy and useful that there should be someone who is idle and useless, if only to point a moral to other people. And that's my job in life: to be an awful example.

[Enter ANNA.]

PENN. Oh, honey, I'm glad you've come down.

CYNTHIA (*going to ANNA*). Anna, darling!

ANNA. Why, whatever's wrong? You all look terribly solemn!

DUNWOODY. You have our deepest sympathy, Miss Penn.

ANNA. Sympathy! Why, nobody's died, have they?

DUNWOODY. We were thinking of the courtesy you have received from Fair.

JAGO. I'd put it stronger than that, Miss Penn. I'm a bit of a rough diamond myself, a plain, blunt business man, with no frills or fal-lals about me, but I do know how a woman should be treated, and in my opinion Fair did not treat you as a gentleman should treat a lady.

ANNA. How ought a gentleman to treat a lady?

JAGO. Well, everybody knows that! With respect and . . . and forbearance! . . .

ANNA. Now, that's the most insulting thing that's ever been said to me!

JAGO (*staggered*). My dear Miss Penn! . . .

PENN. Honey, honey!

ANNA. Hush up, father! You've got no call to belittle Tony after all he's done for you.

PENN. I know that, honey! . . .

ANNA. Your inside doesn't know itself, and yet you stand there and let all these people run down Tony behind his back! . . .

JAGO. If I've said anything that isn't in good taste. . . .

ANNA. Anybody'd feel mad if she was told she was a spoiled kid.

CYNTHIA. Who said so?

ANNA. Mr. Jago!

JAGO. I never! I appeal to you all. Did I say such a thing? Mr. Penn?

PENN. No, Mr. Jago, you didn't, but you might have said it pardonably.

ANNA. That's right! That's right. Take his part against me!

PENN. I'm not taking anyone's part. I'm trying to be nootral! . . .

CYNTHIA. The historic role of America, Mr. Penn.

JAGO. What did I say?

ANNA. A gentleman ought to treat a lady with forbearance. I call that an insult.

JAGO. Oh, I give it up.

ANNA. Indulge her like a spoiled kid. Well, Tony doesn't treat a woman that way. He treats her as an adult, and that's how I want to be treated. I don't want to be treated like a nit-wit! . . .

JAGO. I never suggested such a thing. Did I? Did I?

ANNA. I don't suppose I'll ever see Tony again, and even if I do, I'm through with him, but all the same I won't stand for any of you abusing him behind his back.

PENN. He treated you rough, honey!

ANNA. That's a refreshing novelty in my life. I feel more respect for myself after being treated rough by Tony than I feel when Mr. Jago treats me as if I were loopy! . . .

JAGO. Here, let me get out of this!

CYNTHIA. Sit down, James. This is a good opportunity for you to be a strong, silent man.

JAGO. No man has more respect for women than I have. I owe everything to my mother.

CYNTHIA. Most of us do. You are not the only man in the world that's had a mother. Sit down. (*He does so, protestingly.*)

DUNWOODY. May I make a suggestion?

ANNA. No, you may not. You've never liked Tony, and anything you say'll be prejudiced. Where is Tony?

CYNTHIA. Do you want to see him?

ANNA. No, but I'd like to know where he is, so's I can avoid him.

DUNWOODY. I don't think I can do any good by remaining here, so I'll go to my room. I don't suppose I shall see you again, Lady Cynthia! . . .

CYNTHIA. We're staying to supper.

DUNWOODY. I shall have mine in my room. Good night

CYNTHIA. Good night!

DUNWOODY (*to the others*). Good night! (*Murmurs of farewell from the others, during which DUNWOODY retires.*)

CYNTHIA. Too noble! Too, too noble!

PENN. It's a damned queer thing, but we all seem to have been on each other's nerves ever since Tony went out. I believe I'm going to have another attack of indigestion! . . .

ANNA. Cynthia, do you think Tony's gone for good.

CYNTHIA. I hope not.

ANNA. Well, I do. I don't want to see him again. Come upstairs, will you? I'd like to talk about him.

CYNTHIA. Very well, my dear! (*She and ANNA go out.*)

PENN (*to JAGO*). Do you wanna wash before supper?

JAGO. I might as well. What do you make of 'em?

PENN. Make of what?

JAGO. Women! What do you make of 'em?

PENN. I can't make anything out of 'em.

JAGO. Same here. They're tough propositions whatever way you take them! . . .

[They go out, talking together, and for a few moments, the stage is left empty. Then FRED enters and makes up the fire and tidies the room. While he is doing so, GEORGE enters.]

GEORGE. 'As Mr. Fair come back yet?.

FRED. No, Mr. 'Oskins. Do you think 'e's drowned 'imself?

GEORGE. Drowned me grandmother! What 'ud 'e do that for?

FRED. Broken 'eart!

GEORGE. Don't be sloppy, boy!

FRED. Well, people 'ave drowned themselves, 'aven't they? And for love—unrequited love!

GEORGE. What kind of love?

FRED. Unrequited.

GEORGE. You know, young fellow, you've been to the pictures, and if you ain't careful, you'll come to a bad end.

FRED. Mr. 'Oskins, I'm getting fed up with the way you talk to me.

GEORGE. What's the matter with the way I talk?

FRED. Take the 'eart out of me, that's what you do. Whatever I say, you always turn it nasty.

GEORGE. I don't want no back-chat, Fred.

FRED. See! You can say what you like to me, but I mustn't answer back. Oh, no! And then they call this the land of free speech. Look 'ere, Mr. 'Oskins, I've been wantin' to express my feelin's about you for some time, and I'm going to do it now.

GEORGE. Well, go on.

FRED. In my opinion, for what it's worth, you're be'ind the times.

GEORGE. I'm *what*?

FRED. Be'ind the times. Out of date! Obsolete! You don't believe in progress! . . .

GEORGE. Oh, I don't, don't I? And what might progress be, eh?

FRED. Anybody knows that. Why, everything gettin' better an' better, of course!

GEORGE. Then I suppose you're an improvement on me, eh?

FRED. On the 'ole, yes. Mind, you 'ave your points, Mr. 'Oskins!

GEORGE. Gawblimey!

FRED. You do your best, but that isn't good enough for to-day. That's why this hotel! . . .

GEORGE. Inn, my lad; inn!

FRED. 'Otel is better, Mr. 'Oskins, believe me! If you could only get into the 'abit of calling it an 'otel instead of a ninn, you'd be a lot better off. I've been thinking a great deal about this place lately. Something could be done with it. It only wants reorganizing.

GEORGE (*almost speechless*). Oh, does it?

FRED. Yes. We ought to change its name to begin with. 'Oo wants to stay at a place called the Inn of St. Peter's Finger? Why, it sounds like a Salvation Army

Shelter. Now, if we was to call it the Carlton 'Otel, an 'ave a couple of crooners and tea-dances every afternoon! . . .

GEORGE. Gawd, if you say another word I'll 'it you! With my own 'and I'll 'it you!

FRED. Now, no violence, Mr. 'Oskins.

GEORGE. This place 'as been like this for 'undreds of years.

FRED. That's what's wrong with it. People aren't interested in the past no more; they're interested in what's 'appening now. I'm only telling you this for your own good, Mr. 'Oskins! . . .

GEORGE. You 'ave the audacity to give me advice—you, that's 'ardly got your long trousers on. I can listen to reason from anybody, but I 'ave my limits, and you're one of 'em.

FRED. Can't I give you a bit of friendly advice without 'aving my 'ead snapped off?

GEORGE. You know nothing and you think you know everything. I may be 'eadstrong and out of date, but I'm content to be. I've 'ad a good look at your generation, my lad, and I prefer my own, see! And if you think I'm going to turn this old place into a dancing-saloon where a lot of 'alf-wits can go jiggling up and down as if they was damn well dotty, you're mistaken. See!

FRED. I only made a suggestion.

GEORGE. Yes, and it was a rotten suggestion. Out of date, indeed! Well, all right, I'm out of date! And I'm going on being out of date! See! Thank God, I shan't last for ever!

FRED. Amen.

GEORGE (*with a great effort at calmness*). If you was to offer me your resignation, Fred, do you know what I'd do? I'd accept it. [Enter ANTHONY FAIR.]

FAIR. What's this, George? Having a row?

GEORGE. Fred's been giving me some advice, sir. He thinks I'm out of date.

FAIR. Well, so you are. So am I. When the world was made safe for democracy, George, it was made very unsafe for us.

GEORGE. Giving me advice, the saucy 'ound. I'm willing to take a rebuke from a babe, sir, but I'm damned

if I'll take one from a suckling. (*To FRED.*) 'Ave you polished your knives yet?

FRED. No.

GEORGE. Well, go an' polish 'em then. (*FRED moves towards the door.*) An' while you're doing 'em, ask God to give you a numble an' a contrite 'eart. You need it.

FRED. I'm going 'ome. I've 'ad enough of this.

GEORGE. 'Ome!

FRED. Yes, Mr. 'Oskins! I resign 'ere an' now.

FAIR. Frederick!

FRED. Yes, sir!

FAIR. Come here, Frederick, my lad! (*FRED approaches him.*) Have you downed tools, Frederick?

FRED. Yes, sir, I 'ave.

FAIR. Don't.

FRED. I 'ave my pride, sir! . . .

FAIR. Reflect, Fred. By that sin the angels fell.

FRED. I don't know nothing about that, sir!

FAIR. No. I'm just telling you about it! Think of how much depends upon you, Fred: the smooth working of this old inn. George here will not always be with us.

GEORGE. I'll be 'ere as long as I can, sir.

FAIR. Well spoken, George. Now, Fred, there's proper pride for you. Doesn't it make you feel you want to be like George?

FRED. No, sir, it don't.

GEORGE. Don't waste your persiflage on 'im, sir. 'E ain't worth it.

FRED. Oh, ain't I?

GEORGE. No, you ain't!

FAIR. Damn you both, shut up! Frederick!

FRED. Yes, sir.

FAIR. Run along, like a good lad, and polish the knives. George, you won't be hard on him?

FRED. Look 'ere, all I got to say is! . . .

FAIR. We know all that you've got to say, Frederick, and we don't want to hear it. The knives!

FRED (*after a moment's hesitation*). All right! I'll do 'em this time, but it's entirely without prejudice!

FAIR. Oh, quite! (*Exit FRED.*) George, our day's over!

GEORGE. I daresay things'll come right some day, sir. Fred ain't a bad lad really. 'E's only just a bit above 'imself. When 'e's married to one of these little platinum blondes 'e'll get a 'ell of a drop.

FAIR. Don't be melancholy, George.

GEORGE. I 'ope, sir, things' ave turned out satisfactory between you and Miss Penn, sir?

FAIR. At the moment, no!

GEORGE. I'm sorry to 'ear that. I think you and 'er 'ud get on together a treat. You'd be good for 'er, and, beggin' your pardon, sir, she'd be good for you.

FAIR. Where is she?

GEORGE. Upstairs in their private sitting-room. That Mr. Dunwoody's there, too, and 'er father and the two that come this afternoon.

FAIR. They're still here, are they?

GEORGE. Yes, sir. Staying to supper, they are. She seems to 'ave 'im fairly on toast, sir, if I may use a vulgar expression. It's the wrong way round. My experience 'as taught me that women as a general rule 'ate to think they can domineer over men.

FAIR. Think so?

GEORGE. I'm sure of it, sir! If Miss Penn marries that Mr. Dunwoody, whom I do *not* like, sir, 'e'll do what she tells 'im and sulk all the time 'e's doing it. And she'll 'ate 'im for not asserting 'imself. Then you'll come along, sir, and the two of you'll 'op it.

FAIR. George, this conversation has become immoral.

GEORGE. I 'ardly know nowadays what's moral and what ain't. When I was a lad it was considered indecent for a woman to ride in a hansom cab. Now, women *drives* cabs! My mother would turn in 'er grave if she knew that, but I don't see that it makes very much difference.

FAIR. George, I'm going to confide in you.

GEORGE. Thank you, sir. I 'ope I shall prove worthy of your trust!

FAIR. I am penniless!

GEORGE. That's a very common complaint, sir.

FAIR. And I am deeply in love with a very nice girl!

GEORGE. That's a fairly common complaint, too, sir.

FAIR. Her father says I've got to take a job or I can't have the girl! What would you do?

GEORGE. Take a job and marry the girl! After all, sir, the little bit of work you'll do won't be noticed.

FAIR. True, George, but what about the principle?

GEORGE. Ignore it, sir. More 'arm is caused in this world by principle than by anything else. I strongly recommend you to marry the young lady.

FAIR. You do.

GEORGE. Yes, sir, although it's my considered opinion, sir, that she's going to marry you, whether you like it or not, but it would look better if you was to get in first with the idea.

FAIR. Thank you, George.

GEORGE. Not at all, sir. I'm always 'appy to oblige.

[As he goes towards the door LADY CYNTHIA enters.]

CYNTHIA. Tony! You've come back! George, I hope you've been giving him good advice.

GEORGE. The best I can think of, my lady! But 'e's obstinate and 'eadstrong. Like a lot of people.

FAIR. George doesn't approve of many people.

GEORGE. No, sir, I don't. In my opinion, 'alf the people in the world ought to be dead, and the other 'alf ought never to 'ave been born. [Exit.]

FAIR (to CYNTHIA). I'm sorry to find you still here.

CYNTHIA. James and I thought that we ought to try and put things right between Anna and you. He didn't know you were a sort of cousin of mine. If he had, he would never have accused you of cheating at cards. (To JAMES, who enters as she speaks.) Would you, James?

JAGO. What, my dear?

CYNTHIA. You wouldn't have accused Tony of cheating at cards if you'd known he was related to an earl's daughter?

JAGO. No, I wouldn't. Why didn't you say you belonged to a good family, Fair? Even if you *had* cheated, old Whitten would have been delighted at being done by a good-class sort of chap. I would myself.

CYNTHIA. All you've got to do now is to make it up with Anna. Tell her a few lies! . . .

JAGO. Will she believe them?

CYNTHIA. No, but she'll pretend she does.

FAIR. Anna must take me on my terms, not on hers. And one of my terms is strict truth between her and me. No pretences.

CYNTHIA. This passion for truth unnerves me.

JAGO. I can cope with lies as well as anybody, but I have to have all my wits about me when people start telling me the truth. It's too exhausting, Fair. Fall into line with the rest of us, and only tell it occasionally. Now, I'll slip upstairs and tell Miss Penn that Cynthia here wants to have a chat with her, and then when she comes down, Cynthia'll leave you alone together, and you can talk her round. Tell her you didn't mean what you said about marrying her for her money, and that you'll take a job! . . .

FAIR. My dear Jago, you mean well, I'm sure, but if I were to do that, I should feel worse than if I had cheated your friend at cards.

JAGO. Then it's hopeless!

[Enter ANNA.]

ANNA. Cynthia! aren't you coming? . . . (Sees ANTHONY.) Oh, I'm sorry! I didn't know you were engaged.

CYNTHIA. Come in, Anna. James and I have been talking to Tony.

ANNA. Not about me?

CYNTHIA. Well, we casually mentioned your name.

ANNA. I'd rather you hadn't. Come upstairs when you've finished. (*She turns to go.*)

CYNTHIA. Anna, we've been trying to make Tony behave nicely, but he won't.

ANNA. That doesn't surprise me!

CYNTHIA. I suggested that he should swear he didn't mean a word of what he said about marrying you for your money and refusing to do any work! . . .

ANNA. And won't he?

FAIR. No, Anna.

ANNA. Well, you're honest anyway. I can't say I feel proud, though, when a man tells me to my face that the only attraction I have is my money—and even that isn't mine: it's father's.

FAIR. It isn't your only attraction, Anna: it's one of them.

ANNA. The most important of them?

JAGO (*to CYNTHIA*). I say, aren't we a bit *de trop* here?

CYNTHIA. Dear James—always tactful. (*To ANNA.*) I'd love to stay and hear the rest of this conversation, but I'm afraid James is right. We'd be out of place. Do be dears, you two, and make it up.

JAGO. I don't mind telling you there'll be a handsome wedding-present from me if you do—something substantial.

CYNTHIA. Priceless James!

JAGO. Have I said anything that isn't in good taste, dear?

CYNTHIA. Anything you say will always sound delicious to me, darling. Come along! (*They go out together.*)

[ANTHONY and ANNA do not speak for a few moments.

Then]

ANNA. Well?

FAIR. Well!

ANNA. You haven't answered my question yet.

FAIR. What was it?

ANNA. I asked you if my money was my most important attraction.

FAIR. No, it's not. You are. But it's a very important one.

ANNA. So important that you won't marry me without it, even when I beg you to. Well, whatever happens, you've made me realize just what my value is, and I suppose I ought to feel grateful to you for that.

FAIR. You make me feel pretty low-down.

ANNA. Perhaps that's because you are low-down! . . .

FAIR. Oh, Anna!

ANNA. No, I didn't mean that. You got me mad, and I guess I just said the first nasty thing I could think of.

FAIR. While I was out just now, I had a good hard think about you and me. I wondered whether we could do it.

ANNA. Do what?

FAIR. Get married without your father's money.

ANNA. Well?

FAIR. No. There's too much chance in my way of living. Why, I'm out of a job now, and I may not get another for a long time. What sort of a life would it be for you? . . .

ANNA. What sort of a life is it for *you*?

FAIR. For me? Oh, fun! I'm an adventurous chap, and I've learnt how to take the rough with the smooth. Women aren't adventurous—at least, I've seldom met any that are. They like settled regular things: comfort and security. So you see, my dear, if I were to marry you without your father's money, you'd be committed to a life of adventure which every woman instinctively hates. We'd be miserably unhappy.

ANNA. I don't know. Perhaps I could learn to play cards, too. You could teach me, and I wouldn't be as nervous about cheating as you are.

FAIR. No, Anna, no. Put the idea clean out of your head. There can be no marriage between you and me unless your father comes down handsomely with his money.

[Enter GEORGE, carrying a telegram on a tray.]

GEORGE (to FAIR). This 'as just come, sir!

FAIR. Thank you, George.

GEORGE. The boy's waiting in case there's an answer, sir.

FAIR (to ANNA). Excuse me. (Opens and reads telegram.) Oh, good! Bring me a form, George.

GEORGE. Yes, sir. [Exit.

FAIR. I've got a job. Lady Runcorn wants me to go to her house in the Isle of Wight for a fortnight! Splendid.

ANNA. And you're going?

FAIR. Of course.

ANNA. How did she know you were here?

FAIR. She didn't. The telegram was sent on from my rooms. [Enter GEORGE with telegram form.

ANNA. When will you go?

FAIR. As soon as I can. To-night, if possible. Is there a train, George?

GEORGE. We don't 'ave no Sunday trains 'ere, sir. And the last one from Tipton Newbury is just going out of the station now, sir. At least it's due to go now.

FAIR (scribbling message on form). H'm! Well, I must go by the first train in the morning. See that I'm called in time, will you?

GEORGE. Yes, sir.

FAIR. And give this to the boy. How much will it be?

GEORGE. I'll let you know, sir.

FAIR. Right! (*Exit GEORGE.*) Well, good-bye, Anna!

ANNA (*surprised*). Good-bye!

FAIR. Yes. I don't suppose I shall see you again to-night, and you will hardly be down to breakfast when I leave to-morrow.

ANNA. No, I suppose not.

FAIR. Good-bye, then. (*He holds out his hand to her.*)

ANNA (*hitting his hand aside*). How dare you make me love you, and then try to run away from me!

FAIR. But! . . .

ANNA. Do you think I'm going to let you off like that? You walk in here and start making love to me two minutes after we meet, and when I'm half crazy about you, you get a telegram from some old woman called Runcorn, and say "Good-bye, Anna!" What do you think I'm made of? Plasticine? You asked me to marry you, and you got to marry me. (*She goes to the door.*) Hi, George! George!

FAIR. But, my dear Anna! . . .

ANNA. You hush up! George!

GEORGE (*running in his agitation*). Yes, miss!

ANNA. Where's that telegram?

GEORGE. Mr. Fair's, miss?

ANNA. Yes. Where is it?

GEORGE. The boy's got it.

ANNA. Well, get it back from him.

GEORGE. He's gone, miss.

ANNA. Well, go after him and fetch him here. Hurry!

GEORGE. Very good, miss.

[*Utterly dumbfounded, GEORGE goes out.*]

ANNA. I've just had about enough of your nonsense, Mr. Anthony Fair. You've done all the talking so far. Now, it's my turn. You don't leave this room until you've agreed to marry me.

FAIR. Don't be silly, Anna.

ANNA. You talk mighty big about adventure, but when it comes to a real, live, honest-to-goodness adventure, where are you? Shivering in your shoes!

FAIR. I'm not shivering! . . .

ANNA. Yes, you are. The idea of marrying me without

my money's got your bones rattling. Well, I'm ready to take a chance, if you are.

FAIR. Take a chance?

ANNA. Yes. Whatever your life is or may be, I'll take a chance and share it. Are you game?

FAIR. But, my dear Anna, you don't know what you're proposing.

ANNA. I know perfectly well what I'm proposing. I'm proposing to marry you and run the risk of not having a nickel between us. Well, I'm willing.

FAIR. No.

ANNA. You're funking it, Anthony Fair.

FAIR. Yes, I am. I haven't the courage! . . .

ANNA. Well, I have. Oh, I could hit you when I see you standing there, looking noble, when all I want you to do is to hug me so hard you'll hurt me. Kiss me, or I'll kick your shins.

FAIR. I'm not going to be bullied into marrying you.

ANNA. I'm waiting.

FAIR. What for?

ANNA. To be kissed. Hurry.

FAIR. I wish somebody would come. (*The door opens and GEORGE enters.*) God bless you, George!

GEORGE (*puzzled*). Sir!

FAIR. I said "God bless you!"

GEORGE. I 'ope 'E will, sir. 'Ere's the telegram, miss!

ANNA. Got a pencil?

GEORGE (*handing her one*). Yes, miss.

FAIR. What are you going to do?

ANNA. Alter this.

FAIR. But! . . .

ANNA. Hush up. (*There is silence for a moment or two while she alters the message.*) Like to 'ear what I've written?

FAIR. Well, yes, since I'm supposed to be sending it.

ANNA (*reading*). Very much regret cannot accept kind invitation as I am shortly going to be married! . . .

GEORGE. To you, miss?

ANNA. Yes, George, to me. You can tell everybody in the hotel.

GEORGE (*turning to FAIR*). Oh, sir, I am glad. I

always said you was made for each other. I'll go and send the telegram at once.

FAIR. Just a minute, George.

GEORGE. Sir?

FAIR. Give me that telegram.

ANNA. Don't you, George. Go and send it off.

[But FAIR has taken the form from GEORGE and is now tearing it up.]

FAIR. Tell the boy there's no answer. (*Taking a shilling from his pocket.*) Give him that for his trouble.

GEORGE (*despondently*). Very good, sir! I'd have given him one myself if you'd let me send the telegram off.

[Exit.]

ANNA. I'm in earnest, Tony, real earnest. I ask you to marry me and let me share whatever you've got. Please.

FAIR (*folding her in his arms*). My dear, how can I?

ANNA. You love me?

FAIR. I adore you.

ANNA. Won't you be sorry you aren't married to me?

FAIR. I shall be miserable.

ANNA. Then don't you think it's a pity to go about being miserable when you don't have to be?

FAIR. We mustn't begin it all over again, Anna.

ANNA. All right, we'll forget it. We'll sit here and pretend everything's nice and pleasant. We're in love—that's all there is to think about now! (*She sits down on a sofa and makes him sit beside her.*) Put your arms right round me. (*He does so.*) That's better! (*They sit silent for a while.*)

FAIR. I say, how long are we supposed to sit like this?

ANNA. Until somebody comes.

FAIR (*rising*). What's the good, Anna?

ANNA. If I'm not to see you any more, can't I have some little memory of you to keep me in comfort when I'm a withered old maid? (*This forecast of her future is too much for her, and she begins to cry.*)

FAIR (*putting his arms round her*). Darling, don't!

ANNA. You'd cry, wouldn't you, if you asked a man to marry you and he said: "No." I've got a terrible future in front of me, Tony!

FAIR. No, darling, you haven't! Life is going to be

very bountiful and gracious to you. Perhaps you'll marry Dunwoody! . . . No, you'd better not do that. George thinks that you and he wouldn't get on together.

ANNA. What's George know about it?

FAIR. George is a very wise old bird. He thinks that Dunwoody and you would lead a cat-and-dog life! . . .

ANNA. Did he say that? (*Without waiting for him to reply, she bounces off the sofa and goes to the door.*) George!

FAIR (*alarmed*). I say, look here! . . .

ANNA. I'll give George a piece of my mind!

FAIR. But he didn't quite say that.

ANNA. Well, we'll just hear what he did say.

[GEORGE enters.

GEORGE. Did you call me, miss?

ANNA. Yes, I did. What do you mean by discussing my affairs with Mr. Fair?

FAIR. I say! . . .

ANNA. Hush up, you!

GEORGE. Me, miss!

ANNA. You said if I was to marry Mr. Dunwoody, we'd lead a cat-and-dog-life.

FAIR. No, no, Anna: he didn't say that. What he said was that he didn't think you'd suit each other. The cat-and-dog remark was a little embellishment of my own.

GEORGE. And really, miss, you and Mr. Dunwoody would not suit each other. 'Eaven, if you'll pardon the expression, might 'ave made Mr. Fair and you for each other.

ANNA. George, I like you.

GEORGE. I've very glad to 'ear it, miss, and if you'll excuse me for saying so, I like you, miss.

ANNA. I'm going to tell you something, George. And I want you to give me your advice. •

GEORGE. Yes, miss.

ANNA. I've asked Mr. Fair to marry me, and he won't.

GEORGE. Oh, sir, you couldn't be so foolish.

FAIR. She hasn't told you my reasons, George.

GEORGE. There can't be any *reasons*, sir, for such a thing as that. I can only conclude, sir, that you did not 'ear Miss Penn aright or that you was *non compos mentis*.

ANNA. What did you say he was?

GEORGE. *Non compos mentis*, miss. That's a Latin expression meaning barmy!

ANNA. Well, George, if you were me, what would you do about it?

GEORGE. Why, miss, I'd start getting my trousseau ready.

ANNA. Do you think I ought to marry him soon, George, or wait till we get to know each other better?

GEORGE. Marry 'im soon, miss. It's a mistake to wait until you know each other better.

ANNA. Thank you, George.

GEORGE. Go up to the vicarage to-morrow morning, and ask the vicar to publish the banns next Sunday, and by the end of the month you can be married.

ANNA. Is that all we have to do?

GEORGE. Well, most of it. But the vicar'll tell you the rest. I'm delighted to think you're going to be married 'ere, miss. You'll look very 'andsome, both of you, walking down the aisle of our church, arm-in-arm, 'usband and wife, with the organ playing "The Voice that breathed o'er Eden"! . . .

FAIR (*fairly shouting at him*). George!

GEORGE. You'll 'ave the wedding-breakfast 'ere, I 'ope?

ANNA. I guess so. I'll go up to the vicarage in the morning, and tell the clergyman to get busy right away. Thank you, George.

GEORGE. Not at all, miss.

FAIR. George, you old blackguard! . . .

GEORGE. No, sir. There's a better expression, sir—a Latin one—the *deus ex machina*, sir. Is there anything else, miss?

ANNA. No, thank you. Not at the minute!

GEORGE. Then per'aps you'll allow me to carry the 'appy news to the kitchen? . . .

FAIR. George, if you say one word! . . .

ANNA. My father will be glad if you will all drink our health.

GEORGE. Thank you, miss. We will.

[*Exit.*

FAIR. Anna, I want a word with you.

ANNA. Very well, Anthony.

FAIR. This thing must stop. I am not going to marry

you, as I told you before, unless your father agrees to maintain me.

ANNA. Well, he won't, but you're going to marry me, money or no money. How much have you got?

FAIR. I haven't any!

ANNA. What have you done with the money you cleaned up at Jago's house?

FAIR. I've spent it long ago.

ANNA. Do you think he'd like to have a game now?

FAIR. You have the instincts of a crook. I'm only one by necessity.

ANNA. Well, I want to be a help to my husband instead of a drag on him. I think a woman ought to take an interest in her husband's work. If he's a banker, she should study up banking, and if he's a card-sharper! . . .

FAIR. I'm not a card-sharper.

ANNA. Well, whatever you are, it's my duty to take an interest in it. It's a pity father doesn't play cards. You might have a game with him.

[*The door opens with some violence, and Mr. PENN enters with such swiftness that he may be described as hurling himself into the room.*]

PENN. Look here, Tony! What's the meaning of all this talk about you and Anna getting married to-morrow?

FAIR. To-morrow?

PENN. Yeah! George came into our room just now and congratulated me on your approaching marriage—nuptials, he called it—and when I asked him what in hell he was talking about, he said something about you and Anna going up to the vicar to-morrow.

ANNA. Father, you're all worked up. What's the matter with you?

PENN. I thought we'd come to an honourable agreement? I said I'd give my consent to your marrying him if he took a job! . . .

ANNA. Well, he's not going to take a job. He's positive about that.

PENN. To-morrow morning we leave this hotel and take the first boat back to America.

FAIR. There's no need for you to leave, Mr. Penn. I'm leaving myself to-morrow morning.

ANNA. I forgot about that. Father, he's got a job!

PENN. Got one?

ANNA. Yes. Some old woman called Runcorn has hired him for a fortnight to brighten up her house-party.

PENN. That's not a job!

FAIR. In any event, job or no job, I'm going to-morrow morning, so you needn't cut your holiday short on my account.

PENN. I'll feel safer when I'm in America.

FAIR. Mr. Penn, I absolutely decline to marry your daughter without your blessing and a settlement.

PENN. Take a job, and you'll have both.

FAIR. No.

ANNA. I don't think Tony ought to work. I don't think he's cut out for it. I don't believe he could work if he tried! . . .

FAIR. How do you know?

ANNA. I'm only judging by your looks. You seem sort of incapable! . . .

FAIR. Well, you're absolutely wrong. I daresay I could work better than anyone in this hotel.

PENN. You come and have a try at my job, and if you make good, the whole business is yours. I'll retire and leave it to you.

FAIR. And how long do you think it'll take me to get into the state you're in now?

ANNA. After all, Tony, you can only ruin the business. Father, I'm going to stay right here until that man marries me.

PENN. You can't stay without money.

ANNA. I don't know so much. (*At the door.*) George!

GEORGE (*outside*). Yes, miss.

ANNA. Come here. I want to talk to you.

GEORGE (*entering*). Yes, miss?

ANNA. Will you sell the inn to me?

GEORGE. } To you, miss?

PENN. } What in thunder are you up to now, Anna?

FAIR. } You can't keep a pub!

ANNA. How do you know what I can do? (*To GEORGE.*) I got a l'il bit of money saved somewhere, and I'd like to buy the inn from you. Will you sell it to me?

GEORGE. Well, miss, I 'ardly expected this! . . .

PENN. You don't have to take any notice of her, George!

ANNA. Father, will you kindly not interfere in my business. I keep on telling you I'm going to marry Tony, and you keep on paying no attention to me. Well, I'm going to marry Tony. (*She turns to ANTHONY.*) You'd better listen to this.

FAIR (*with a gesture of despair*). I'm listening!

ANNA. But I got to live somehow, and it occurred to me I could carry on this inn, while Tony entertained the visitors with his charming personality.

FAIR. My God!

ANNA. We'll be able to see then just how much this charming personality is worth in hard cash.

PENN. It's a darn fool proposition. I won't agree to it.

ANNA. I shan't ask you to, father. George, you'll sell the inn to me, won't you?

PENN. If you do, George, you won't buttle for me.

ANNA. That won't matter. He's only going to America to be near me, and as I shan't be there, he won't want to go. You can stay on here, George, and buttle for us.

GEORGE. On that understanding, then, miss, I'll let you 'ave it!

ANNA. Thank you, George. We'll settle all the details in the morning after I've seen the vicar about Mr. Fair and me.

PENN. If you were my daughter's father, George, would you let her marry Mr. Fair?

GEORGE. Yes, sir, I would. I don't 'old with everything 'e says, but I'd sooner 'ave 'im for my son-in-law than most young gentlemen.

FAIR. Thank you, George, and if you had a daughter, I'd be delighted to have you for my father-in-law.

GEORGE. The 'appiness would be mine, sir! (*To MR. PENN.*) I'd certainly 'ave 'im for a son-in-law if I could afford it. Is there anything else you'd like to ask me, sir?

PENN. No, I think I've had as much as I can digest for one evening. Thank you, George.

GEORGE. Not at all, sir. Supper'll be ready soon. I'll sound the gong when it's dished up. (*Turning to Anna.*) Oh, the best time to see the vicar, miss, is just after ten o'clock in the morning. I don't know 'ow you've thought of getting married, but if you'll allow me to make a suggestion, I'd 'ave a choral celebration. It's very nice to think about afterwards.

ANNA. All right, George; we'll have it.

GEORGE. There ought to be at least one 'appy day in a married couple's life. [Exit.]

FAIR (*with an air of determination*). I don't know what your intentions are, Mr. Penn, but Anna's seem perfectly plain. So do George's. Between them they've arranged to have me married, whether I like it or not, by the local vicar in the midst of a choral celebration.

ANNA. You've got it right first time, Tony!

FAIR. When I'm married, I'm to become a sort of comic bar-tender in a village pub kept by my wife. Just what I'm to do, I don't know, but probably I shall do a nightly song-and-dance to amuse the jug-and-bottle department! . . .

ANNA. No, you'll just go about being charming!

FAIR. Well, if I'm to be forced into a marriage with your daughter, Mr. Penn! . . .

PENN. Who's forcing you to marry her?

FAIR. She is. Look at her. There is a look of determination in that woman's eye which shows that she has absolutely made up her mind to marry me.

ANNA. That's quite right. In three weeks or a month from to-morrow morning, you will be my husband. There's another l'il matter I forgot to mention, father. I propose to do a l'il literary work. I thought if I were to write an account of my life for the *Chicago Tribune* or the *Saturday Evening Post*, it'd be very interesting. Prominent Millionaire's Daughter Gives up Wealth for Man She Loves. We could have pictures of me drawing beer for the villagers, and Tony in his shirt-sleeves swilling out the bar. I think America'd like that.

PENN. You can't do that, honey! . . .

ANNA. I certainly can, and I will.

PENN. But, my dear girl, my life would be made a

misery to me. The entire Press of America would get on my trail.

ANNA. That kind of occurred to me. Fatlier.

PENN. No, honey, I'm not going to be coaxed into anything of that sort.

ANNA. Father, I want to whisper something to you!

PENN. Well, what is it?

ANNA. Go and look out of the window, Tony!

FAIR. I ought to hear this, if it's about me!

ANNA. Go and look out of the window!

FAIR (*to PENN*). Anything she says to you behind my back isn't binding on me.

PENN. I won't forget.

FAIR. On that understanding I'll look out of the window.

(*He does so.*)

ANNA. Daddy!

PENN. Yes, honey.

ANNA. I'll make him work all right. Wait till I've got him married!

PENN. Do you think you can do it?

ANNA. Sure. He'll be glad to work when I'm through with him.

PENN. All right. (*To FAIR.*) I give in, Tony. Anna's persuaded me against my will.

FAIR (*suspiciously*). What did she say to you?

PENN. She just told me she couldn't live without you, and I guess I don't want a dead daughter.

ANNA. Do you want to go upstairs, father?

PENN. No, honey! . . .

ANNA. Yes, daddy, you do.

[*She leads him to the door and when she has opened it, she gives him a kiss and pushes him outside. Then she comes back into the centre of the room.*]

FAIR. You forward female!

ANNA. Darling!

FAIR. Come here!

ANNA (*as she approaches him*). If you hit me, I'll squeal for father!

FAIR. You . . . utterly adorable thing! . . .

[*He suddenly folds her in his arms and kisses her.*]

ANNA. Say, you're suffocating me!

FAIR (*releasing her*). Did I hurt you?

ANNA. Yes, but you can do it again.

[He does so, and while she is in his arms, GEORGE sounds the gong for supper, and the play ends.)

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